



## Summary Information

**Title:** Esther Ramsey Collection

**Collection Number:** 2018:018

**Creator:** Esther Queen Pennington Ramsey

**Collection Dates:** 1890-1959

**Extent:** 3.5 cubic feet

**Language:** English

**Collection Abstract:** This collection contains correspondence, letters, cards, tax records, bank statements, legal documents, and photographs ranging in date from the 1890s to the 1960s. Most of the correspondence is addressed to Esther Pennington Ramsey from her husband, friends, family, and children.

## Repository:

The History Center  
102 N. Temple  
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936-829-3543  
[www.thehistorycenteronline.com](http://www.thehistorycenteronline.com)

**Author/Processing Information:** This collection was processed by Allison Grimes and Patsy Colbert in the summer and fall of 2018

## Biographical/Historical Note:

Esther Ramsey (née Pennington) was born on December 14, 1888 in or around Brenham, Texas. It is unknown where she spent most of her childhood. By 1903 at the age of 15, she appears to be firmly placed in Timpson, Texas. Esther married William Yancy "Yank" Ramsey (May 8, 1860 to April 13, 1939) in 1906 at the age of 18. Yank was 46 years old at the time, and had been married previously to Nettie Lavonna Page. They divorced around the year 1900 and there were two children from that marriage, Cynthia Della Ramsey (1889-1978) and Alford Herman Ramsey (1892-1969).

After Esther married Yank, the couple lived on what became the family farm located southeast of Timpson, Texas in Shelby County. Esther and Yank had seven children, six of which lived to adulthood. Lillie Evilina was born September 29, 1907; William Lenard was born February 9, 1910; Dorothy Idealia was born April 2, 1914; Millerd was born December 10, 1917 and passed away May 18, 1918; David Ellis was born February 15, 1920; Emma Dean was born April 27, 1924; and Denard Pinkney was born May

15, 1930. The family raised crops including cotton, watermelons, tomatoes, peanuts, and corn. During the Depression, Lenard sent money home from his job with the Civilian Conservation Corps. After Yank's death in 1939, Ellis continued to operate the farm with the help of the youngest son, Denard. As the children grew up, they began to make their own lives.

Lillie married Everett Anderson in 1926 and moved to Dallas. The couple divorced sometime after 1941 and Lillie married Albert Ovie Earles in 1947. The Earles had one child, Michael. Lillie passed away June 3, 1993.

Lenard joined the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and worked in the Jasper, Texas area. In 1935 he married Lettie Cornelia Prince who tragically died in childbirth in 1937. When Lenard joined the Army Air Corps in 1940, he was stationed at Lackland Field in San Antonio, Sheppard Field in Wichita Falls, and Amarillo Field in Amarillo. Despite being active duty throughout World War 2, Lenard was never sent overseas. After being discharged from the Army, Lenard married Marie Nancy Catherine Medley in 1945 and they had two sons, Shannon and Randy. Lenard passed away June 15, 1996.

Dorothy married Alto Hughes sometime between 1935 and 1941 and they made their home in Center, Texas. She spent her career working in various retail stores. The couple had one son, William Howard. Dorothy passed away January 14, 1988.

Ellis never married and lived at home for the majority of his life. He did briefly work in Dallas in the 1940s, but returned home to care for the aging Esther. He passed away August 24, 2000.

Emma Dean moved to live with her sister, Lillie, in Dallas after graduating from high school in 1941 or 1942. She worked in retail stores and for the telephone company. After marrying Warren Earl Chapman before 1952, she relocated with her husband to Eastland, Texas. The couple had two children, Evelyn and Paul. Emma Dean passed away April 22, 2006.

Denard joined the U. S. Army in the 1950s and was stationed at Fort Hood. After his discharge, he worked for Trailmobile in Longview, Texas. In 1963, Denard married Linda Faye Eldridge. The couple divorced in 1973 and Denard returned to the family farm in Timpson where he lived until he passed away August 22, 2016.

The bulk of the letters in this collection are from Esther's children, but earlier letters are from Esther's mother, aunt, sister, and various suitors.

**Collection Scope and Content:** This collection contains correspondence, letters, cards, tax records, bank statements, legal documents, and photographs ranging in date from the 1890s to the 1960s.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged and described at the folder level, except for photographs which are each described individually.

### **Subject Terms**

#### **Personal Names**

- Ramsey, Esther Queen Pennington (1888-1972)
- Ramsey, William Yancy (1860-1939)

#### **Family Names**

- Ramsey Family

- Pennington Family

#### Locations

- Shelby County (Tex)
- Washington County (Tex)
- Dallas County (Tex)

## Access and Use

**Access Restrictions:** None

**Acquisition Information:** Collection donated by creator's grandson, Shannon Ramsey, in May 2018.

**Custodial History:** This collection of letters and other correspondence was uncovered while cleaning out an old house on property that has been in the hands of the Ramsey family since the late 1850s. Esther Pennington Ramsey lived in the house until shortly before her death in 1972. Her daughters and one son, Lenard, had already moved away and/or married and no longer lived at home. Her son, Denard, lived in the house until he married and moved to Longview, Texas in the early 1960s. Another son, Ellis, lived in the house until his death in 2000. From the time of Ellis' death until the cleaning out process began in 2017, the house lay dormant and over time the house became run-down and virtually open to the elements. Amazingly, despite the conditions, this correspondence was found in the house and donated to The History Center by Lenard's son, Shannon Ramsey in 2018. About 25% of this correspondence is over 100 years old.

**Citation:** Esther Ramsey Collection, 1890-1959, 2018:018 The History Center, Diboll, TX

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## Collection Inventory

### Series I: Correspondence

#### Box 1

Folder 1	October 31, 1892 to May 17, 1895
Folder 2	January 25, 1900 to August 14, 1903
Folder 3	October 13, 1903 to March 31, 1904
Folder 4	April 1, 1904 to November 19, 1904
Folder 5	November 25, 1904 to March 6, 1905
Folder 6	March 8, 1905 to April 27, 1905
Folder 7	May 4, 1905 to July 6, 1905
Folder 8	July 8, 1905 to October 6, 1905

#### Box 2

Folder 1	October 4, 1905 to December 21, 1905
Folder 2	January 14, 1906 to April 16, 1906
Folder 3	April 17, 1906 to October 18, 1906
Folder 4	November 19, 1906 to November 26, 1910
Folder 5	November 26, 1910 to October 19, 1912

Folder 6 January 1, 1913 to January 18, 1919  
Folder 7 September 18, 1921 to April 5, 1929  
Folder 8 January 11, 1930 to May 9, 1932  
Folder 9 July 3, 1932 to January 25, 1935  
Folder 10 January 30, 1935 to February 2, 1937

**Box 3**

Folder 1 May 15, 1937 to May 29, 1939  
Folder 2 July 24, 1939 to April 4, 1940  
Folder 3 April 12, 1940 to December 19, 1940  
Folder 4 December 20, 1940 to January 27, 1941  
Folder 5 February 14, 1941 to June 25, 1941  
Folder 6 July 17, 1941 to September 16, 1941  
Folder 7 September 16, 1941 to October 7, 1941  
Folder 8 October 7, 1941 to November 24, 1941  
Folder 9 November 25, 1941 to December 31, 1941  
Folder 10 January 1, 1942 to February 12, 1942

**Box 4**

Folder 1 February 12, 1942 to February 28, 1942  
Folder 2 February 28, 1942 to April 1, 1942  
Folder 3 April 13, 1942 to May 10, 1942  
Folder 4 May 11, 1942 to June 26, 1942  
Folder 5 July 1, 1942 to August 12, 1942  
Folder 6 August 13, 1942 to September 11, 1942  
Folder 7 September 12, 1942 to October 8, 1942  
Folder 8 October 8, 1942 to November 4, 1942  
Folder 9 November 6, 1942 to December 22, 1942

**Box 5**

Folder 1 January 14, 1943 to May 10, 1943  
Folder 2 May 13, 1943 to June 5, 1943  
Folder 3 June 6, 1943 to August 1, 1943  
Folder 4 August 9, 1943 to October 27, 1943  
Folder 5 October 31, 1943 to December 10, 1943  
Folder 6 December 11, 1943 to January 6, 1944  
Folder 7 January 8, 1944 to February 1, 1944  
Folder 8 February 5, 1944 to February 29, 1944  
Folder 9 March 3, 1944 to March 26, 1944  
Folder 10 March 27, 1944 to April 8, 1944

**Box 6**

Folder 1 April 11, 1944 to May 15, 1944  
Folder 2 May 17, 1944 to June 22, 1944  
Folder 3 July 5, 1944 to October 14, 1944  
Folder 4 October 16, 1944 to December 1, 1944  
Folder 5 January 2, 1945 to June 1, 1948  
Folder 6 December 8, 1948 to December 20, 1948

Folder 7            December 21, 1948 to August 29, 1949  
Folder 8            September 22, 1949 to December 20, 1949  
Folder 9            May 16, 1950 to February 20, 1951

**Box 7**

Folder 1            March 14, 1951 to February 12, 1953  
Folder 2            April 1, 1953 to July 15, 1953  
Folder 3            July 31, 1953 to January 21, 1955  
Folder 4            November 19, 1955 to December 12, 1957  
Folder 5            December 14, 1957 to December 18, 1957  
Folder 6            December 18, 1957 to December 15, 1959  
Folder 7            Undated

**Series II: Photographs**

Folder 8            Photographs

    Photograph 1:            Photo of Esther Ramsey, June 10, 1962  
    Photograph 2:            Lillie Earles and Esther Ramsey, 1945  
    Photograph 3:            Esther Ramsey, c. 1960s  
    Photograph 4:            Esther Ramsey, August 18, 1945  
    Photograph 5:            Michael Earles, William Howard Hughes, and Esther Ramsey, c. 1952  
    Photograph 6:            Denard, Lenard, Esther, and Ellis Ramsey, October 1946  
    Photograph 7:            Esther Ramsey, mid-1950s  
    Photograph 8:            Esther Ramsey, August 1962  
    Photograph 9:            Denard and Esther Ramsey, c. late 1940s  
    Photograph 10:            Evelyn Chapman, Paul Chapman, and Esther Ramsey, c. 1956  
    Photograph 11:            Emma Dean Chapman, Denard Ramsey, and Esther Ramsey, 1930s  
    Photograph 12:            Ellis, Denard, and Esther Ramsey, August 1954  
    Photograph 13:            Esther Ramsey, c. 1950s  
    Photograph 14:            Lenard, Esther, Lillie, and Yank Ramsey c. 1910  
    Photograph 15:            Esther Ramsey, c. 1950s  
    Photograph 16:            Yank, Ellis, Dorothy, Emma Dean, and Esther Ramsey in front of original  
    Ramsey home, 1920s  
    Photograph 17:            \*\*No Photograph 17\*\*  
    Photograph 18:            Ellis, Esther, and Dorothy Ramsey, 1920s OR Denard, Esther, and Emma  
    Dean Ramsey, 1930s  
    Photograph 19:            Yank, Lillie, Lenard, and Esther Ramsey, c. 1910  
    Photograph 20:            Esther Ramsey and her chickens c. 1930s  
    Photograph 21:            Esther Pennington, early 1900s  
    Photograph 22:            Esther Pennington, early 1900s  
    Photograph 23:            Esther Ramsey and Orange Pennington (Esther's sister)  
    Photograph 24:            Yank, Ellis, Emma Dean, and Esther Ramsey, c. 1924  
    Photograph 25:            Evelyn Chapman, Esther Ramsey, Paul Chapman, May 1955  
    Photograph 26:            Shannon Ramsey, Esther Ramsey, Michael Earles, and William Howard  
    Hughes, 1948 or 1949  
    Photograph 27:            Esther Pennington and another person, early 1900s  
    Photograph 28:            Lillie Earles, Esther Ramsey, Dorothy Hughes, and Emma Dean  
    Chapman, 1950s or 1960s  
    Photograph 29:            Esther, Lenard, and Shannon Ramsey, November 6, 1948

- Photograph 30: Lillie Earles and Esther Ramsey, 1950s or 1960s  
 Photograph 31: Esther Ramsey and Paul Chapman, c. 1952  
 Photograph 32: Esther, Ellis, and Dorothy Ramsey, c. 1920  
 Photograph 33: Esther Ramsey and Orange Pennington, c. 1960  
 Photograph 34: Esther Ramsey and Ellis OR Emma Dean OR Denard Ramsey, 1920, 1924, or 1930  
  
 Photograph 35: Lenard and Esther Ramsey, 1940s  
 Photograph 36: Esther, Dorothy, and Ellis Ramsey, c. 1920  
 Photograph 37: Front: Empie Ramsey, Emma Dean Chapman with Evelyn Chapman, Esther Ramsey, Back: Dorothy Hughes and Lillie Earles, May 1955  
  
 Photograph 38: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 39: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 40: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 41: Esther Ramsey with Randy Ramsey (grandson), Jun 20, 1965  
 Photograph 42: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 43: Yank, Emma Dean, Lillie, Dorothy, Denard, Esther, Lenard, and Ellis Ramsey, c. 1934-1936  
  
 Photograph 44: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 45: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 46: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 47: Esther Ramsey, June 23, 1963  
 Photograph 48: Esther Ramsey, between 1962 and 1965  
 Photograph 49: Denard and Esther Ramsey, c. 1950s  
 Photograph 50: Esther Pennington, early 1900s  
 Photograph 51: Mary and Esther Ramsey with Dorothy Hughes, c. 1945