

Benedict Daniels Photographs

Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Collection ID: P026

Provenance and Biography Note:

The scrapbook pages were donated by Helen Benedict Daniels in April of 1980. Kevin Donnelly of the Cambridge Public Library was part of the donation process.

Dates: c. early 1900s

Extent: 1 folder, 4 scrapbook pages and 1 typed note

Processed by: Brittany Fox, February 2019

Access: Collection is available for research under the CHC rules of use

Collection Description:

The Benedict Daniels Photograph Collection consists of scrapbook pages of photographs created by Miriam Benedict, RN. The individuals in the collection are unidentified but they may be families or patients she interacted with during her time as a nurse under the supervision of Dr. Sumner Andrews. The collection also contains a typed note by Helen Benedict Daniels with a subsequent written note by Kevin Donnelly of the Cambridge Public Library.

Historical Context and Biographical Note:

Miriam Benedict and Helen Benedict Daniels were sisters who grew up in Elmwood house, Cambridge and worked as nurses during and after WWI. Helen was a member of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor (Y.P.S.C.E.) around 1918 and then became a volunteer nurse for the Red Cross. In 1921 she graduated cum laude from Radcliffe with a degree in natural history. That same year she became engaged to Frederick Irvin Daniels (b. ca. 1899), of Providence, who graduated from Brown University. They married in Wyoming in 1922 and later moved to Orange, New Jersey.

Miriam Benedict, RN, was a nurse ca. 1919-1922 under the supervision of Dr. Sumner Andrews. Andrews was the physician in charge of Ward IV Infant Welfare Committee and then the East Cambridge Health Center in 1922. His programs focused on teaching young mothers how to care for their newborn children.

Items:

1. A note from Helen Benedict Daniels explaining that the images come from an album by Miriam Benedict. They were taken between 1919-1921, according to Kevin Donnelly of Cambridge Public Library

2. Four photographs mounted on black cardstock. The first image is a child sitting on a stoop. The second image is a woman sitting and holding a child to her left and a baby in her arms. The third image is two children sitting together in a yard with a third child further back to the right. The yard is located between two homes. The final image is a baby in white sitting upright on a chair with a fur seat.
3. Four photographs mounted on black cardstock. The first image is a woman with her five children, including a baby in her hands. The second image is a little girl in a dress sitting on a step. The third image contains two of the children from the first image, wearing the same hats and jackets. The final image has been cut into a baseball diamond shape. It contains a woman and her four children.
4. Six photographs mounted on black cardstock. The first image is a girl smiling for the camera. The next image is two children looking to the right. The third image is a woman holding and attending to a baby while two children stand in front. The fourth image is a woman with four children. One child has his hand in his nose. The fifth image is a faded copy of a child standing in front of a wall. The final image is a faded copy of the same child standing in front of the wall and looking at the camera. The photographs were probably all taken on the same day due to their location.
5. Five photographs mounted on black cardstock. The first two images are of a little girl holding a sibling on a row of steps. The third image contains the two children and a woman by the steps. The next image shows the younger child in a carriage with the older sister standing beside. The final image is the woman sitting and holding the baby up with the sister sitting to her right.

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