

Roberts Family, ca.1900-ca.1977

Processed by Angela Heupel, 9 Sep 2003

Restrictions

None.

Biographical Sketch

There was no biographical information available for this collection but the photographs are mainly of the Roberts family and their friends in Fixer, KY (Lee County). Chester F. Roberts, also called Red, was married to Stanley. They had a daughter named Letha Mae. There is also a Letha Roberts photo dated 1900, this may be Chester's mother with Letha Mae being named after her. Many of the photos were taken at the Fixer Gasoline plant in Lee County. It was struck by lightning ca.1931 and exploded killing both Frank Hobbs and Roy Lutes. The manuscripts contain a poem about the Cumberland Gas Plant explosion, a short story by C.F. Roberts about a trip through the Panama Canal [it is uncertain if this is a factual or fictional story] and lists of family genealogy which explains some of the connections in the Roberts family as well as people outside of the family.

Scope and Content Note

These photographs and manuscripts were separated from a collection of photographs formerly known as the Townsend Photographs. They are arranged starting with photos of identified people, and these starting with the Roberts family photos themselves. The photos work themselves out through a family web starting with Letha Mae, then moving to her parents, then on to extended family and friends. Following the identified people are the photos of people who were not identified (a photo in which a person is the subject but is either too far away to see or just not identified by the original photographer). The next group consists of identified places and unidentified places. There are a few larger photos at the end of this group including a photo of a train with its crew and a photo of Letha Roberts. The manuscript material follows the photographs and consists of a letter to Stanley Roberts from C.F. Roberts (not her husband, but probably her grandson), a poem about the Cumberland Gas Plant explosion, a short story by C.F. Roberts about a trip through the Panama Canal and lists of family genealogy which explains some of the connections in the Roberts family as well as people outside of the family.

Donor Information

Unknown (2003-014).

Folder List

Photographs

f.01

- n.d. Letha Mae as a baby sitting on a train car, Fincastle, KY
- n.d. Mother and Letha Mae standing together, West Virginia
- 1920's Letha Mae as a baby sitting in a chair, Fincastle, KY
- n.d. Letha Mae as a child standing next to large barrels, Fincastle, KY
- n.d. Letha Mae as a child in the corner of a photo of a train, Fincastle, KY
- 1932 Stanley and Letha Mae standing next to a car, Fixer, KY
- 1932 Stanley Gilbert Roberts and daughter Letha Mae Roberts sitting on the front steps of their home, Fixer, KY
- 1932 Stanley and Letha Mae inside of a car,
- 1935 Stanley, Letha Mae, and Mary McNabb in front of a store in Slade, KY, Photo titled "Our place of business"
- n.d. Chester and Stanley, a portrait of them together
- 1924 Stanley Roberts in a motorcycle side car, Fixer, KY
- n.d. Red and Stanley standing by a car
- n.d. Red Roberts in boxing gloves
- 1924 Red Roberts in boxing gloves, Young "Red" just before he got KO
- n.d. Red Roberts marked by X in a landscape photo including two other men unidentified
- 1931 C.F. Roberts standing in rubble of plant explosion, Fixer, KY
- 1924 A man sitting on a motor cycle with a side car, back of photo says Crawford Akin. Chester Roberts. Fixer, KY
- 1918 C.F. Roberts sitting in a chair in a cornfield
- 1919 C.F. Roberts (on right) and another man unidentified standing in front of trees holding rifles
- 1914 Susannah Roberts and Letha Roberts standing on the front porch of a boarding house in Campton
- n.d. Gertrude Roberts standing in front of a water tower marked Natural, writing on back to Chester which reads "Hello Chester- How are you? This because me enjoying life very well. I have been going to meeting. I seen Pearl Saturday she said she hadn't heard from you in a long time. I will write more next time. Be good and ans. Your coz. G.R."
- 1924 Chapman and Red boxing each other
- 1924 Charlie chapman and C.F. Roberts standing together, Fixer KY
- n.d. Chas Chapman in boxing gloves
- 1924 Charlie Chapman standing in front of car
- 1924 C.F. Reed and C.F. Roberts standing together
- 1924 C.F. Roberts and Omer Catron sitting together on a wall in front of barrels, Fixer, KY
- n.d. Omer Catron standing by pipes at Fixer Plant, Lee Co.
- n.d. Omer Catron standing by pipes at Fixer Plant, Lee Co.
- 1918 C.F. Roberts and Granville Wireman sitting together
- n.d. Hobbs Chapman and Reed, two men holding another on their shoulders, Fixer, KY
- 1924 Walker Grear and C.F. Roberts sitting on motor cycles in Fixer, KY, (two copies)
- n.d. C.F. Roberts sitting on post, Chas Chapman standing beside, and Ike Slone marked by X at the rubble of the gas plant explosion

- 1924 Charles Chapman and wife, Moodie Booth, Omer Catron, Stanley and C.F. Roberts, Fixer, KY
- 1924 Cumberland Gasoline Plant, Christmas, L to R C.F. Roberts, Omer Catron, Walker Grear, Fixer, KY, (two copies)
- n.d. Vivian McKinney on the right of two other women sitting on the ground, Clay City, KY
- 1921 Ola Mae standing next to James White who is seated and is Ola's Grand Papa, Jan. 30
- n.d. Bertie Coons Williams standing next to Mattie Steele Sewell
- 1919 Frank Spencer at the Lee Co. Oil Fields
- n.d. Troy Bush standing next to barrels in Fixer, KY
- ca.1940 Mr. And Mrs. J.E. Akin sitting on rocking chairs inside of a home, Madison, WV
- 1919 Gerald Wagner, son of Al Wagner, pointing a hand gun at something outside of the photo, Supt Pet X written on the back of the photo, Lee Co. KY
- n.d. Gerald Wagner kneeling with a rifle (believed to be G. Wagner because of the black gauntlets on his fore arms with a star on them)
- n.d. Gerald Wagner and an unknown man pointing revolvers at each other (believed to be G. Wagner because of the black gauntlets on his fore arms with a star on them)
- f. 02
- n.d. Two men standing together
- n.d. Four men standing together
- n.d. Two men standing together with a horse
- n.d. Women passing in front of a train at Natural Bridge, KY
- n.d. A man holding a baby
- 1924 A man holding a baby by train tracks in Fincastle, KY
- n.d. A woman sitting on a log with chicks at her feet
- n.d. Two men standing by a shed like building
- n.d. A woman standing behind a standing baby on train tracks
- n.d. Two men sitting on a train car for Cumberland Gasoline Co.
- n.d. A baby sitting in the grass
- n.d. A man standing in a pile of debris
- n.d. A large group of people gathered in front of a building
- n.d. Two men walking behind barrels
- 1924 A group of people standing in a shadow behind a wheel like object
- n.d. Dewey Booth, standing among barrels, Fixer, KY
- n.d. Two men in ties standing next to each other
- n.d. A group of men standing by an extremely tall corn stalk, one man on another's shoulders to show the height of the stalk
- n.d. Two men standing at the mouth of Townsend Cave
- 1919 A group of people standing in the rocks of a hill side at the Lee Co. Oil Fields
- 1923 A man standing in front of the Cumberland Gas Plant In Fixer, KY
- 1924 Cumberland Gasoline Storage tanks after the fire, five men standing among them, December
- 1919 Three men standing together on a porch, Lee Co., KY
- n.d. Pet X Camp Oil Field, six men standing together on a porch, Red is marked with an X, Lee Co., KY

- n.d. KY State Capitol
- n.d. Lee County Oil Field, Power House
- 1934 Campton School
- 1935 People walking by the Natural Bridge Excursion Train,
- n.d. Posts sticking up out of the ground with barrels behind them, Fixer, KY
- 1925 Gas Plant, Fixer, KY
- 1924 Men standing behind some wheel looking objects, Christmas, Fixer, KY
- n.d. Fincastle Office and Engine Room, Cumberland Gasoline Corp. Loading Rack, L and N Railroad
- 1931 Engine Room after the explosion, Frank Hobbs and Roy Lutes killed, Fixer, KY
- 1931 Cumberland Gasoline engine room after explosion, Frank Hobbs and Roy Lutes killed in explosion, Fixer, KY, Jan.
- 1931 Cumberland Gasoline engine room after explosion, Frank Hobbs and Roy Lutes killed in explosion, Fixer, KY, Jan.
- n.d. A rock formation, Fincastle, KY
- 1928 Men standing around a ditch where four bodies were found, near Clarksburg, WV, around
- 1931 Inside of a building after the plant explosion, Fixer, KY
- n.d. Sky Bridges, KY
- 1924 Cumberland Gas Plant, men marking a tank after lightning struck a shed
- 1924 Cumberland Gasoline plant, Fixer, Lee Co., KY, June
- n.d. Big Sinking Creek, gas plant after explosion, Fixer, KY, (two copies)
- ca.1927 Cumberland Gasoline Corp. loading rack, pump house, and office, Railroad and tanks, Fincastle, Lee Co., KY, about 1927-1928
- ca.1927 Gasoline train cars at loading rack, Fincastle, KY, around 1926 - 1927 - 1928
- 1924 Cumberland Gasoline Plant, Fixer, KY
- 1935 A photo of a building in a town marked Standard Oil Production, Slade
- n.d. Buildings behind a stream, behind a rocky hill
- n.d. A torn up building
- n.d. A building with a missing roof
- 1931 A building with a missing roof, two men standing in the rubble
- n.d. Buildings on top of a hill with a heading saying started housekeeping here
- n.d. A torn up building
- n.d. A partially torn up building
- n.d. Men in the distance standing among buildings
- n.d. A winter scene of snow blanketing the ground and a pine tree

- f. 03
- ca.1900 A portrait of Miss Letha Roberts in a white bonnet standing in front of her washing tub
- ca.1907 Meadow Branch School class, Joel Cox as teacher, Red Roberts is the student with an arrow pointing to him, around 1907 or 1908
- ca.1927 Engine #12, J.E. Akin was the engineer and Crawford Akin was the Fireman, two other men in the photo are unknown, hauling logs and pulp wood on Williams River, Webster Co., WV, Cherry River Boom and Lumber Co., Richwood, WV, in the late 1920s, 1927 or 1928

- 1927 Three men standing/sitting/ on the front of a train engine, J.E. Akin was the engineer, WV, Williams River, Cherry River Boom and Lumber Co. Richwood, Nicholas County, WV
- n.d. Photo of the landscape of Fixer, KY
- ca.1920 Reprint of a photo of Easten Town Saw Mill, located between Sandy Ridge and booth Ridge on Lower Devils Creek, 1920-1930
- n.d. Reprint of a photo of Billy Booth at Lower Devils Creek
- n.d. Reprint of a photo of a landscape including buildings in front of a creek with a small bridge crossing the creek

Manuscripts

f.04

- 1968 A letter to Mrs. Stanley Roberts of Campton, KY 41301 from C.F. Roberts of Fixer, KY, Lee County, dated July 16 1968:
July 15, 1968, Fixer Ky

Just one more line from the Fixer post office which will close August 2nd, 1968 after serving thru the Big Sinking Oil _____ and for over fifty years mail was delivered here by ox and mule team, horse back, train, or car and on foot.

But everything must pass on. This will be the last letter from your old home P.O.

With Love,
Chester.

- n.d. A piece of note paper recording the names of five generations of the Roberts family and their birth dates. This includes Letha Akin Roberts, C.F. Roberts, Letha Mae Roberts, Gregory Knack, and Greg Chester Knack. The generations span 90 years. The slip of paper has been photocopied and is attached to that copy.

- n.d. One photocopy of a piece of paper listing the family tree of Virginia Roberts, daughter of Commodore P. Roberts, who married John Duff. It tells where people are buried, who they married, the names of their children, and who the children married.

- 1977 A photocopy of a list of people, stating who they married, when they died, and who their children were. Towards the middle it picks up with Letha Roberts and follows her family through to the birth of Greg and Gary Knack. It is dated Oct. 19.

f. 05

- ca.1975 Two typed poems under the tittle Early Morning, one dated 1975 about a person attending their own funeral and not knowing that they were dead, and the other is a letter to someone already dead telling them about what is going on in the living world.

- 1931 A poem dated Oct. 1, 1931 about the lightning strike at the Cumberland Gas Plant. It is written in the first person and sounds factual, however, it is not signed or noted as being such. It has the sound of being written by C.F. Roberts but it is not known for sure.

f. 06
1939

A short story by C.F. Roberts, four pages long with writing on both sides of the last page. It is about a man who takes a ship through the Panama Canal and on up to Long Beach. He holds a package for one of his ship mates which eventually gets stolen. However, it is stolen by the “good guys” as it is a plan on how to protect the Panama Canal from invasion; “bad guys” had been after it through out the entire story. The narrative is written in first person form and it is not know if it is a true story about C.F. Roberts or a work of fiction.