
Register of the Naomi Blair Papers, 1930s-1960s

Collection number: MSS 006

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Naomi Blair Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1930s-1960s

Collection number: MSS 006

Creator: Blair, Naomi

Extent: 6 document cases

2 cubic feet

Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.

Los Angeles, California

Language: English

Access

The collection is available for research only at the Library's facility in Los Angeles. The Library is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Researchers are encouraged to call or email the Library indicating the nature of their research query prior to making a visit.

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Preferred Citation

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Biography

Naomi Blair was born on March 21, 1902 and grew up in central Wisconsin. Her family was of French-Canadian descent and her father was a miner in Wisconsin.

From Wisconsin she moved to New York where she attended the Nursing School of New York University (NYU). Included in the collection are notes and mimeographed handouts from her classes at NYU from about 1939 to 1947 (her insurance policies indicate that she had become a registered nurse). In 1948, Blair moved to Southern California, where she had a brother living. The exact date of her death is not known, but it is estimated to be in the late 1970s.

It appears from Blair's papers that she was quite concerned with political and social issues. There is evidence that she was involved with the Communist Party (CP) beginning in the 1930s and that she was also involved with labor organizing in Wisconsin and with civil rights activities.

Her brother Fred Blair was the chairman of the Wisconsin CP and her other brother John was part of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade that fought in the Spanish Civil War. He was for a time a prisoner of war and his sister was very active in the cause to free him. While in California she worked with the Independent Progressive Party, particularly on civil rights issues.

Scope and Content

The Naomi Blair Collection covers the period of the late 1930s to approximately 1970. It is arranged in three series: PERSONAL, EDUCATION and ORGANIZATIONS.

In the PERSONAL Series there is a letter from Peggy Dennis asking Blair about Peggy's husband Gene who had been Secretary of the Communist Party of the United States in the 1950s. The response is a very long letter that goes into great detail about Blair's activities and remembrances about the CP in Wisconsin in the 1930s. In addition to correspondence, this series contains insurance and financial records which were retained because they provide rudimentary biographical information about Blair, such as her date of birth, and, in the absence of more substantial personal papers, give some indication of her daily life.

The EDUCATION Series contains material on Blair's training as a nurse and notes from Communist Party classes she attended in Southern California.

It is from the ORGANIZATIONS series that the most information about her interests can be obtained. Here are different pamphlets and publications that she received or collected. She gathered material on Black rights, HUAC, and Latin America in addition to other social and political concerns.

PERSONAL

Box 1, Folder 1 **Correspondence. 1960-1971.**
Box 1, Folder 2 **Fictional Writings by Naomi Blair.**
Box 1, Folder 3 **Nursing Association membership Information.**
Box 1, Folder 4 **Song Sheets and Song Book.**
Box 1, Folder 5 **Tax and Employment Records. 1962-1966.**
Box 1, Folder 6 **Insurance Policies.**
Box 1-2, Folder 7-8 **Bank Statements:**
Box 1, Folder 7 **December 1964-September 1965.**
Box 2, Folder 8 **October 1965-November 1966.**
Box 2-3, Folder 9-13 **Financial Records:**
Box 2, Folder 9 **1962-1963.**
Box 2, Folder 10 **1964.**
Box 2, Folder 11 **1965.**
Box 2, Folder 12 **1966.**
Box 3, Folder 13 **General.**
Box 3, Folder 14 **Writings of Cyril Briggs.**
Box 3, Folder 15 **William C. Taylor Campaign.**
Box 3, Folder 16 **Board of Supervisors. Notes. [1963?].**

EDUCATION

- Box 3, Folder 17 **NYU School of Education. Problems in Nursing Education. 1939-1947.**
- Box 3, Folder 18-20 **CPUSA Education Department:**
- Box 3, Folder 18-19 **Notes from Classes Attended. [1957?].**
- Box 3, Folder 20 **Notes From Classes Attended. 1958.**

ORGANIZATIONS

CPUSA:

- Box 3, Folder 21-22 **Pamphlets and Publications. 1950s-1960s.**
- Box 4, Folder 23 **General File.**
- Box 4, Folder 24 **Milwaukee. 1960s.**
- Box 4, Folder 25 **Southern California District. 1950s-1960s.**
- Box 4, Folder 26 **Subscription to *Daily Peoples World*. 1960s.**
- Box 4, Folder 27 **Black History and Black Rights. 1930-1960.**
- Box 4, Folder 28 **Pamphlets on Africa.**
- Box 4, Folder 29 **Opposition to HUAC.**
- Box 5, Folder 30 **Committee to Preserve American Freedoms.**
- Box 5, Folder 31 **Protection of the Foreign Born.**
- Box 5, Folder 32 **American Civil Liberties Union.**
- Box 5, Folder 33 **General Union Activity.**
- Box 5, Folder 34 **Political Newsletters.**
- Box 5, Folder 35 **General File.**
- Box 5, Folder 36-38 **Publications:**
- Box 5, Folder 36 **Latin America Today. April 1953-October 1956.**
- Box 5, Folder 37 **Latin American Facts. February 1951-December 1952.**
- Box 5, Folder 38 **Latin American General Pamphlets.**
- Box 6 **Oversized Materials. Newspaper Clippings. Copies of *The Open Forum* from April 1961-June 1968 and the *Civil Liberties* from January 1963-May 1968.**
- Box 6 **Two (2) copies of a drawing by Ruben Arthur, 10/50 Old Riley. Upstairs in the Graphic File.**