



COLLECTION NAME	Ruth Chamberlin Collection
COLLECTION NUMBER	MSS 977
VOLUME	20 folders; 0.75 cubic feet
DATES	circa 1930-1988
PROCESSED BY	Melissa Strickland / SDH
RESTRICTIONS	None

#### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ruth Chamberlin was born November 4, 1903 in Yonkers, New York. Chamberlin attended Hunter College in New York and received her B.S. and M.A. degrees from Teachers College at Columbia University in New York. She also graduated from Mt. Sinai Hospital School of Nursing in New York. She was the educational director at University Hospital of the Good Shepherd at Syracuse University, and later was director of the school of nursing there. Chamberlin was administrative head of the School of Nursing at the Medical University of South Carolina from 1937 until her retirement in 1966. From 1942 to 1945, she took a military leave during World War II to serve as major in the Army Nurse Corps, both in the US and in field hospitals in North Africa, Italy, and France. Back at MUSC, Chamberlin served as educational director from 1937 to 1949. In 1949, the position was changed to that of dean and she served until 1966. In 1987, she was appointed dean emerita of the College of Nursing. From 1940 to 1942, Chamberlin served as the first president of the South Carolina League for Nursing Education. From 1949 to 1951, she was president of the S.C. Nurses' Association and in 1949, president of District #1 S.C. Nurses' Association. From 1952 to 1953 and in 1956 she was adviser to the S.C. State Student Nurses' Association; also in 1956 she was chairman of the Education Division of the State League for Nursing. Chamberlin was the first woman to be a member of the South Carolina State Board of Health Executive Committee; she served by appointment of the governor from 1956 to 1963. In 1965, Chamberlin was granted the most distinguished award given by the S.C. State Nurses' Association in recognition of "outstanding participation in the professional organization and contributions to the achievement of its goals to the end that all people may have better nursing care." After she retired, she remained active in the community and chaired the Education Committee of the Metro Charleston March of Dimes and coordinated its Speakers Bureau activities. In 1967, The City Federation of Women's Clubs named her Woman of the Year in recognition of her service to the community. In 1970, she wrote a comprehensive history of nursing education at MUSC called *The School of Nursing of the Medical College of South Carolina – It's Story*. The same year she was named an honorary alumnus of the College of Nursing and in 1983, the college's historical library

was named in her honor. Ruth Chamberlin died February 19, 1988 after an extended illness.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Ruth Chamberlin Collection, circa 1930 – 1988, contains 0.75 cubic feet, consisting of three scrapbooks and twenty-one folders of material relating to Chamberlin's career as dean of the School of Nursing at MUSC. Files are arranged according to format: papers, scrapbooks, and artifacts. The majority of the papers are collected items including correspondence, newspaper articles and other publicity about Chamberlin and her nursing career. Items pertaining to Ruth Chamberlin's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party, 1983, include many birthday cards, an autograph and guest book, papers detailing the planning of the party, and newspaper clippings of the event. Also included are papers with information on Chamberlin's response to her friends and their gifts. Chamberlin's miscellaneous file, 1956-1988, contains personal correspondence, including with her successor as dean, Elizabeth Mills. A newspaper clipping about Dr. William Mellen McCord, a photo of commencement in 1956, a nametag for an MUSC event, and an obituary for Chamberlin are also included. A scrapbook devoted to a 1958 pageant celebrating the School of Nursing's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was disassembled and filed as a folder, which contains the pageant script and publicity for the event. The Nursing History and Miscellaneous scrapbook, 1930s, does not appear to have a single theme; it has many assorted items including news coverage of a "horseback riding nurse" named Mary Breckenridge, random samples of literature, photographs of famous people, and quotes and comics. Also included is a photograph of a nursery school in Moscow dated 1934, a newspaper clipping from the *New York Herald Tribune*, dated 1928, about aviation, a newspaper article about Marie Curie, and an illustration of a Schick test. The Charleston Tourist scrapbook, 1937-1945(?), contains assorted items such as newspaper clippings, photos, business cards, booklets, and menus pertaining to businesses and locations around Charleston. Chamberlin's retirement scrapbook, 1965-1966, contains birthday greetings and other well-wishing letters to Chamberlin, in addition to photos of her. The Ruth Chamberlin Collection also contains artifacts such as her Bachelor's and Master's hoods and MUSC alumnae scarf.

CITATION FORM: Ruth Chamberlin Collection, MSS 977, Waring Historical Library, MUSC, Charleston, SC.

#### SUBJECT HEADINGS

Lib of Congress:

Chamberlin, Ruth, 1903-1988

Charleston (S.C.) Description and travel Photographs.

Medical College of the State of South Carolina. School of Nursing.

Medical University of South Carolina. College of Nursing.

MeSH:

Education, Nursing—South Carolina

“History of Nursing—South Carolina \$y 20<sup>th</sup> century.

“ Schools, Nursing—history--South Carolina.

## INVENTORY

### Box 1

- Folder 1 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966 (1 of 3)
- Folder 2 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966 (2 of 3)
- Folder 3 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966 (3 of 3)
- Folder 4 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966: Biographical Information
- Folder 5 Chamberlin, Ruth - Death, 1988
- Folder 6 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966: Personal Letters
- Folder 7 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966: Personal Papers, 1937-1962
- Folder 8 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966: Personal Papers, 1952-1965 (1 of 2)
- Folder 9 Chamberlin, Ruth - Dean, 1949-1966: Personal Papers, 1952-1965 (2 of 2)
- Folder 10 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party autograph and guest book, November 6, 1983
- Folder 11 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party planning and details file, 1983
- Folder 12 80<sup>th</sup> birthday cards – 1 of 3, 1983
- Folder 13 80<sup>th</sup> birthday cards – 2 of 3, 1983
- Folder 14 80<sup>th</sup> birthday cards – 3 of 3, 1983
- Folder 15 Miscellaneous, 1956-1988
- Folder 16 School of Nursing Of MCSC's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary pageant, 1958

### Scrapbooks:

- Volume 1 Nursing History and Miscellaneous, 1930s
- Folder 17 Copy, Nursing History and Miscellaneous, 1930s
- Volume 2 Charleston Tourist, 1937-1945?
- Volume 3 Retirement, 1965-1966

### Artifacts:

#### Box 2

- Folder 18 Bachelor's Hood from Teacher's College, Columbia University
- Folder 19 Master's Hood from Teacher's College, Columbia University
- Folder 20 MUSC Alumnae Scarf
- Folder 21 Flexible Disc Recording, History of Medicine in the US, *American Heritage*, October – November 1984