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Rolly Gilmir
Daybook, 1888-1939

Collection 393

Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Sherrie Bowser, December 2024

Creator/Corporate Name: William Rolly Gilmir

Inclusive Dates: 1888-1939

Physical Description: 1 box, (1.29 linear ft.)

Provenance:

The Rolly Gilmir Daybook was donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Access:

These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Harmful Language in Archives:

The Champaign County Historical Archives at The Urbana Free Library is committed to developing inclusive collections that capture the diverse history of our communities. However, some language used in our collections and collection descriptions may be outdated or harmful. Please refer to our statement on [Harmful Language in Archives](#) to learn how we are addressing language concerns in our collections.

Biographical Note:

William Rolly Gilmir was born December 26, 1872, to Alexander Gilmir (1841-1905) and Mary E. White Gilmir (1840-1912). He married Hulda Gilmir in March 1907, and they had three children: Ross Howard Gilmir (1908-1940), Florence Marie Gilmir McIntire (1910-1965), and William Arnold Gilmir (1918-2004). Hulda and Rolly separated in 1930. He died on August 6, 1963.

Rolly Gilmir's records include several name variations. His name has been recorded as William Rolly, Rolley William, Rolland William, and Rolley Gilmir. His last name is also recorded as Gilmer. Hulda and the children appear to have adopted the spelling of Gilmer.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection contains one daybook with entries from 1888 to 1939. Rolly Gilmir was a day laborer who used this book to keep track of his employers and income. His jobs were mainly in Champaign County, although he did have a period when he worked for Council Grove Ice, Light, and Power Co. in Council Grove, Kansas, from 1914-1918. Shorter stays in Iowa, Selma, Alabama, and Bloomington, Illinois, followed his stint in Kansas. In his later years, he purchased a truck and earned money by hauling coal and other goods.

Gilmir has gone back and annotated the book, adding life events such as the death dates of former employers, circling the job he was on when his father died, recording the birth of his first child, and recording firsts in a town, like the first electrical lights in Urbana (March 30, 1884). He also listed the



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prices of produce, utilities, rent, and clothes from 1917 to 1936. [Can be found on pages 116, 130, 194, 300, 309, and 436]. In 1921, he started recording the weather along with his other entries. Towards the end of the book, he starts totaling his earnings throughout his career.

Subject Terms:

Diaries
Economic history
Laborers

Name Terms:

Gilmer, Ross
Gilmer, Hulda
Gilmir, William R.
Gilmir, Hulda
Gilmir, Ross

Container List

Box 1

Item 1: Gilmir Daybook, 1888-1939

Folder 1: Loose items from the daybook, including homeowner's loan correspondence and 1918 Draft Registration Card.