

# Guide to the Eliza Blaker Collection

Special Collections and Rare Books, Irwin Library, Butler University



## Contact Information

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## Summary

### Volume of Collection

5 boxes

### Collection Dates

1892–1994

### Citation

Eliza Blaker Collection, Special Collections and Rare Books, Irwin Library, Butler University

### Related Collections

The Dellinger Education Collection

Processed by Donna Culhane, November 2000

## Biographical Sketch

Eliza Blaker was born on March 15, 1854 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was there as a young woman that she began to follow the teachings of Friedrich Froebel, the revolutionary German educationalist who is best known as the originator of the “kindergarten system.” In 1882 the Hadley Roberts Academy invited Blaker to start a kindergarten in Indianapolis, Indiana. She organized the kindergarten under the holistic style of Froebel, educating not only children but also their teachers and parents.

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Eliza Blaker believed that kindergarten was a “miniature world in which the little one is happy, is harmoniously developed, and learns to think and act as a reasonable being endowed with a high destiny.” Blaker’s kindergarten program stressed the importance of teaching and parenthood, applying a naturalistic, behavioralistic philosophy to the curriculum. No student was ever turned away from her schools; she believed that all children were equal and as such had equal rights to education, no matter what their ethnicity, gender, religion or socioeconomic background.

Eliza Blaker went on to establish kindergartens in twelve other Indiana cities, and also started a college in Indianapolis to instruct kindergarten teachers. This Teachers College of Indianapolis became affiliated with Butler University in 1929, and is now the College of Education at Butler University. In 1926, Blaker died at the age of 89, after serving as an educator for forty-four years.

The Eliza Blaker Room was opened at Jordan Hall, Butler University in 1943 by members of the Eliza Blaker Club, which was an organization of Blaker’s former students who met to continue the work of their teacher. In 1978 the Eliza Blaker Room was moved to Atherton Union, and in 1991 the room was moved to Irwin Library. Today the remnants of the room are housed along with archival materials relating to Blaker on the third floor of Irwin Library, in the Hugh Thomas Miller Rare Books and Special Collections Room.

### Scope and Content Note

The collection contains personal information about and photographs of Eliza Blaker; history of and records from the Teachers College and the Butler College of Education; personal records and photographs of Emma Colbert; records of the Eliza Blaker Club; records for the Eliza Blaker Room; records of the Eliza Blaker School, Indianapolis Public School No. 55; and obituaries. Materials are arranged chronologically. Of special interest are the speeches of Eliza Blaker, (1908-1924), Eliza Blaker’s biography, and Dawn Robert’s honors thesis which serves as a collection guide for the contents of the Eliza Blaker Room.

### Container List

Box	Folder	Contents
1: ELIZA BLAKER MATERIALS, 1892-1958 and Undated		
1	1	Programs of the Memorial Meeting for Eliza Blaker, 1927
1	2	Tributes, 1893-1958
1	3	Tributes, Undated
1	4	Speeches, 1908-1913

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1	5	Speeches, 1914
1	6	Speeches, 1915-1919
1	7	Speeches, 1920-1924 and Undated
1	8	Papers Written About Eliza Blaker, 1882-1948, and Undated
1	9	Carbon typescript of Eliza Blaker's Biography (original 1 of 2), by Emma Lou Thornbrough, Undated
1	10	Carbon typescript of Eliza Blaker's Biography (original 2 of 2), by Emma Lou Thornbrough, Undated
1	11	Constitution of the Indianapolis Association for Childhood Education, Eliza Blaker Branch, Undated

2: TEACHERS COLLEGE OF INDIANAPOLIS -- HISTORY AND RECORDS, 1826-1955 and Undated

2	1	History, 1907-1932 and Undated
2	2	History by Virginia Hollingsworth, 1946
2	3	Affiliation With Butler University, 1925-1932 and Undated
2	4	Annual Reports, 1908-1917
2	5	Annual Reports, 1917-1925
2	6	Annual Reports, 1925-1933
2	7	Trustee's Minutes, 1924-1928
2	8	Correspondence, 1826-1955 and Undated
2	9	Financial Reports, 1910-1933
2	10	State Reports, 1914-1932
2	11	Federal Reports, 1915-1931
2	12	Enrollment, 1924-1932 and Undated
2	13	Commencement Programs / French Restoration Certificate / Graduation Certificates, 1921-1930 and Undated

BOX 3: TEACHERS' COLLEGE (CONTINUED)/ COLLEGE OF EDUCATION/ KINDERGARTEN/ EMMA COLBERT/ ELIZA BLAKER CLUB

TEACHERS COLLEGE

3	1	Phi Kappa Theta, 1914-1927 and Undated
3	2	Scholarships, 1926-1928
3	3	Scholarships, 1929-1931

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3	4	Eugena Hsia Correspondence, 1929-1930
3	5	Mother's Council, Mass Meetings, Teachers' College of Indianapolis Programs, 1915-1918 and Undated
3	6	Miscellaneous, 1907-1945 and Undated

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

3	7	College of Education Programs, Undated
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KINDERGARTEN

3	8	History, 1937 and Undated
3	9	Accreditation documents, 1919-1931
3	10	Graduation Certificates, 1905-1927
3	11	Playfest, 1910-1915
3	12	International Kindergarten Union Programs and Childhood Educational Luncheon, 1911-1934
3	13	Statistical Reports, 1909-1932 and Undated

EMMA COLBERT

3	14	Letters and Poems, 1939-1961
3	15	Correspondence, Blaker to Colbert, 1917, 1922
3	16	Essay about Ruth Burritt, Tribute to Blanche Matthews, Booklet about Eliza Blaker, 1939 -1949 and Undated
3	17	Phonics Book, Undated
3	18	News Clips, 1940 and Undated

ELIZA BLAKER CLUB

3	19	History, 1934-1943 and Undated
3	20	Records (Constitution, By-laws, Certification), 1913-1936
3	21	Rosters, 1934-1939
3	22	Rosters, 1939-August 1941
3	22	Rosters, December 1941-1978, and Undated
3	24	Minutes, Annual Reports, Agendas, Calendars, 1926-1965 and Undated
3	25	Officers, Lists of Ballots, 1934-1963 and Undated
3	26	Committees, 1934-1951 and Undated
3	27	Attendance Lists, 1934-1963 and Undated
3	28	Social and Fund Raising Events, Miscellaneous, 1938-1950 and Undated

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BOX 4: ELIZA BLAKER CLUB (CONTINUED)

4	1	Correspondence, 1934-1977 and Undated
4	2	Songs and Poems of Club Members, 1938-1939 and Undated
4	3	Yearbooks, 1932-1970 (incomplete)
4	4	President's Book, 1936-1937
4	5	President's Book, 1937-1938
4	6	President's Book, 1939-1940
4	7	President's Book, 1940-1941
4	8	President's Book, 1942-1946
4	9	President's Book, 1947-1950
4	10	Financial Papers, Applications for Exemption, Incorporation, 1936-1974 and Undated
4	11	State Corporation Reports, 1951 & 1967
4	12	Two Checkbooks, 1961-1981
4	13	Bank Statements of Account, 1961-1963
4	14	Bank Statements of Account, 1964-1965
4	15	Bank Statements of Account, 1966-1967
4	16	Bank Statements of Account, 1968-1969

BOX 5: ELIZA BLAKER CLUB (CONTINUED)/ ELIZA BLAKER ROOM/ ELIZA BLAKER SCHOOL, INDIANAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 55/ NATIONAL HOMES CLASSROOMS/ OBITUARIES/ PHOTOS

5	1	Bank Statements of Account, 1970-1973
5	2	Bank Statements of Account, 1974-1976
5	3	Bank Statements of Account, 1977-1979
5	4	Bank Statements of Account, 1980-1981
5	5	Bank Records, 1929-1970
5	6	Bills and Receipts, 1952-1975
5	7	Birthday Fund, 1936-1962
5	8	Award Fund 1930-1954
5	9	Federation of Clubs, 1937-1943
5	10	Cancer Society, 1937 and Undated
5	11	Groups the Eliza Blaker Club was Affiliated with, 1927-1959 and Undated
5	12	Dissolution of the Eliza Blaker Club, 1981

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ELIZA BLAKER ROOM

5	13	Dawn Robert's Collection Guide to the Eliza Blaker Room, 1981
5	14	Internal Correspondence at Butler, 1943, 1984-1989 and Undated
5	15	External Correspondence with Butler, 1943-1944 and Undated
5	16	Pamphlets, 1942-1943 and Undated
5	17	Newspaper Clippings, 1943-1950 and Undated
5	18	Receipts, Bills, 1965-1979 and Undated

NATIONAL HOMES CLASSROOMS

5	19	Advertising Materials, 1955
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ELIZA BLAKER SCHOOL, ELIZA BLAKER PLAQUES, OBITUARIES, PHOTOS

5	20	Eliza Blaker Public School No. 55, Documents about the Eliza Blaker Plaques, 1912-1960 and Undated
5	21	Obituaries for Blanche Matthews, Martha Seely, Florence Stroud, Ivah Henderson, Appreciation of Sympathy Cards, 1949-1994 and Undated
5	22	Photos of Eliza Blaker, Emma Colbert, Helen Fay Bain, Eliza Blaker Room