

MSS. Collection #129

**Edith Mullican Family Papers, ca. 1898-1977 [bulk 1920s-1940s].
1 box (17 folders), 85 items.**

NOTE: The numbers cited in parentheses, e.g. 1:5, refer the researcher to the Series#:Folder# in which that name/topic will be found.

INTRODUCTION

This collection consists of photographs and printed materials, including newsletters and programs, acquired primarily by Edith Mullican during her school years and employment with Pilot Life Insurance Company. Of particular note are Pilot Life newsletters under three titles, written for employees and policyholders, as well as sales materials utilized by employees with potential customers. Researchers interested in the history of Pilot Life Insurance Company, Greensboro's educational institutions, or local cultural events may find this collection useful.

Arrangement: This collection is organized in two series and arranged within series by document type and/or subject. The series are: **Mullican Family**, ca. 1898-1977; and **Pilot Life Insurance Company**, ca. 1920s-1950, undated.

Provenance: This collection was donated by Nancy Mullican McDade, the daughter of Roy Irving Mullican, and assigned the accession number 1995.169.1.

Processing: This collection was organized and the finding aid was prepared by intern Jordan Fridley in July 2025.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Born and raised in Forsyth County, North Carolina, **William P. Mullican** (1872-1952) moved to Greensboro in the early to mid-1890s. A member of Greensboro's volunteer fire department, he spent his career in various sectors of the woodworking industry, including cabinetmaking and construction. In 1897, he married Nellie Coletrane (1878-1978), and the couple had two children: Roy Irving (1902-1982) and Frances Edith (1904-1988).

Edith Mullican began her education at Glendale Grammar School on Freeman Mill Road, and she graduated from Pomona High School in 1923 before attending the North Carolina College for Women¹ (now The University of North Carolina at Greensboro). She started working for Pilot Life Insurance Company as a bookkeeper around 1927 and was a travelling auditor by the early 1950s. Outside of her career, she was a member of the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, served on the Salvation Army advisory board, participated in the Philo Club, and

¹ *Mullikins and Mullican of North Carolinas* states that she attended the Woman's College, which was the North Carolina College for Women in the 1920s, but her name does not appear in any yearbooks nor is she listed in the city directories as a student during this period.

volunteered for the Greensboro Urban Ministry. Around 1956, she married Charles Carroll Wimbish (1895-1968), who was president of the Wimbish Insurance Company. Upon leaving Pilot Life, she joined her husband's business and became the company president after his death.

Biographical Sources: The biographical information was gathered from [*Mullikins and Mullicans of North Carolina*](#), by N. Spencer Mullican (Winston-Salem, NC, 1953: pgs. 93, 138), Greensboro city directories, [Ancestry.com](#), William P. Mullican's obituary (*The Greensboro Record*, October 20, 1952), Roy Irving Mullican's obituary (*Washington Post*, February 4, 1982), and Edith Mullican's obituary (*Greensboro News and Record*, December 19, 1988).

SCOPE & CONTENT NOTE

The types of materials in this collection are primarily photographs, programs, and newsletters. The majority center on Edith Mullican's school years and her career with Pilot Life Insurance Company, with some items relating to other family members. Highlights are Pilot Life Insurance Company newsletters and sales materials published during the 1920s and 1930s. Also of note are scrapbook pages containing programs from events that Edith Mullican likely attended in the 1920s, ranging from high school graduations to church services and performances at the National Theatre and Grand Theatre.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Mullican Family. 8 folders (50 items). ca. 1898-1977.

This series is dominated by photographs, programs, and scrapbook pages relating to the Mullican family, mainly Edith Mullican. Class photographs document her time at Glendale Grammar School (1:2), while other images show her at the YWCA during World War II (1:4). Other photographs feature William P. Mullican in military uniform at age 26 and with his wife on their 50th wedding anniversary, members of the Philo Club, and the Mullican family home at 1101 West Florida Street (1:3). The City Health Department permit authorizes W.P. Mullican to keep chickens on his property (1:1).

Many of the printed materials represent Pomona High School and Greensboro Senior High School graduations, Edith's childhood piano recitals, and John Philip Sousa concerts possibly attended by the family (1:5-6). Additional programs from these occasions and others, pasted on loose black scrapbook pages, offer a glimpse into the family's educational milestones, cultural interests, and community connections (1:8). Of particular note among the miscellaneous printed materials are two autographed menus from a dinner honoring Sedgefield Country Club pro Tony Manero after he won the U.S. Open in 1936 (1:6).

2. Pilot Life Insurance Company. 9 folders (35 items). ca. 1920s-1950, undated.

These materials, which include photographs, newsletters, and sales materials, document the activities of Pilot Life Insurance Company during its most prosperous and profitable period.

During this time, both Edith and her brother were employed by the company. While Roy moved to Hyattsville, Maryland, in the early 1940s, Edith remained with Pilot Life into the 1950s (2:7).

The photographs capture key company events, such as the 1927 groundbreaking for the Sedgefield campus, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places (2:1). Also of interest are photographs of a company picnic that highlight the culture company president A.W. McAlister sought to curate (2:3).

The printed materials consist primarily of newsletters, newspaper pages, and sales materials. Newsletters written for both the employees and policyholders detail company operations. The employee newsletter titled *Pilot Pep* was published monthly and discusses both company-wide events and happenings in individual employees' lives (2:6). On the other hand, *The Pilot* was intended for policyholders. While it does report on similar company events, it also conveys the successes of the company and the benefits of working with Pilot Life as a policyholder (2:5). The *Pilot Pictorial* is a shorter, graphic newsletter depicting company events through imagery, including the company picnic and groundbreaking at the Sedgefield campus shown in the photographs (2:8). Two copies of a rotogravure picture section from the October 20, 1928, issue of the *Greensboro Daily News* contain numerous captioned images relating to the company and its personnel (2:7), while the miscellaneous folder includes the program from the cornerstone laying at Sedgefield and a 1925 publication titled *Pilot Who's Who* with portraits and short biographies of company leaders in Greensboro and across the country (2:4).

FOLDER LISTING

<u>Series</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	
1	1	Mullican Family	-- City Health Department permit (1940)
	2	"	-- Photographs -- Education (ca. 1910s)
	3	"	-- Photographs -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1898, 1930s-1950s)
	4	"	-- Photographs -- World War II (ca. 1943-1945)
	5	"	-- Printed -- Education (1914-1936)
	6	"	-- Printed -- Miscellaneous (1915-1950s)
	7	"	-- Printed -- Newspaper pages (1927-1977)
	8	"	-- Scrapbook pages (1922-1926)
2	1	Pilot Life Insurance Company	-- Photographs -- Construction (ca. 1927)
	2	"	-- Photographs -- Miscellaneous (ca. 1920s-1930s)
	3	"	-- Photographs -- Picnic (1933)
	4	"	-- Printed -- Miscellaneous (1925-1932)
	5	"	-- Printed -- Newsletters (<i>The Pilot</i> ; 1927-1932)
	6	"	-- Printed -- Newsletters (<i>Pilot Pep</i> ; 1925-1931)
	7	"	-- Printed -- Newspaper pages (1928, 1950)
	8	"	-- Printed -- <i>Pilot Pictorial</i> (ca. 1931-1933)
	9	"	-- Printed -- Sales materials (undated)