

# Concordia University Library, Special Collections

## Finding Aid - Bellelle Guerin fonds (F029)

---

Generated by Access to Memory (AtoM) 2.4.1 Printed: September 24, 2019

Language of description: English

Concordia University Library, Special Collections

Vanier Library, VL 121

Concordia University

7141 Sherbrooke Street West

Montreal

Quebec

Canada

H4B 1R6

Telephone: 514-848-2424 x 7762

[Email: spec-coll@concordia.ca](mailto:spec-coll@concordia.ca)

<https://library.concordia.ca/find/special-collections/>

<http://concordia.accesstomemory.org/index.php/bellelle-guerin-fonds>

# Bellelle Guerin fonds

---

## Table of contents

---

Summary information .....	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch .....	3
Scope and content .....	4
Arrangement .....	4
Notes .....	4
Access points .....	5

## Summary information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Concordia University Library, Special Collections
<b>Title:</b>	Bellelle Guerin fonds
<b>ID:</b>	F029
<b>Date:</b>	[1847?]-1972, predominant 1875-1920 (date of creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	4 scrapbooks 2 objects
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Language:</b>	French
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	Created 2019-05-22.Revised 2019-06-04; 2019-09-24

---

## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

---

### Note

Bellelle Guerin was a Canadian writer and the founder and first president of the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Bellelle Guerin was born as Mary Ellen Guerin on September 24, 1849 in Montreal. She was the eldest child of six and only daughter of civil engineer Thomas Gueren and Mary Maguire, both of Irish descent. Guerin spent several years of her education at the Mont-Sainte-Marie Convent in Montreal. During this time, she became renowned as a writer and poet. It was then that she adopted the name Bellelle Guerin.

Guerin never married, but raised her brother's two children, Thomas and Mary Carroll, after the death of their mother in 1888. Her brother, James John Edmund Guerin, was a physician and politician. When he was elected mayor of Montreal in 1910, Bellelle served as mayoress. During the following two years, she accompanied him to civic functions and participated in such events as the International Eucharistic Congress, held in Montreal in 1910, and the visit of Earl Grey in Montreal.

In 1917, Guerin became president of the Catholic Women's Club, formerly the Ladies of Loyola Club. In November 1917, the Montreal branch of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) was founded, with herself as first president. Under Guerin's initiative, the Catholic Women's League of Canada was created in June 1920 to unify the various branches of the CWL, and once again, she was elected first president.

In 1922, Guerin was honored with the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice cross from the Roman Catholic Church. In 1923, she was made honorary president for life of the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Meanwhile, the national membership of the CWL had grown to 50,000.

Bellelle Guerin died at age 79 on January 28, 1929, in Montreal.

## Custodial history

The materials were given to Robin Burns by Carroll Guerin. They were donated to the Concordia University Archive, now Records Management and Archives Department by Robin Burns on May 27, 1992. The fonds was transferred from the Records Management and Archives Department to Concordia University Library's Special Collections on September 6, 2018.

---

## Scope and content

---

The Bellelle Guerin fonds documents life and work of the Guerin family. Most significantly, the materials contained in the fonds pertain to the careers of John Edmund Guerin and Bellelle Guerin. The fonds also contains materials concerning other members of the Guerin family. Two scrapbooks document John Edmund Guerin's political career as mayor of Montreal from his election in 1910 until 1912. These scrapbooks also contain materials concerning important events occurring during his mandate, including the International Eucharist Congress; the visits of Earl Grey and the duke and duchess of Connaught; and the death of King Edward 7th, among others. A third scrapbook contains information pertaining to the 1917 election and the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Some documents are also related to Thomas or Mary Carroll Guerin. The fourth scrapbook contains clippings of newspaper articles, most of which were written by Thomas Guerin, Bellelle's father. These articles concern Thomas Guerin's work as a civil engineer in Montreal in the 1870s and 1880s, and document a number of his concerns, including sewerage problems and floods in Montreal.

The Bellelle Guerin fonds is composed of 4 scrapbooks containing clippings and memorabilia, and a pin given to James John Edmund Guerin during the Eucharist Congress in 1910.

---

## Notes

---

### Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on the content of the fonds

### Arrangement

Materials are arranged in the order of receipt.

### Conditions governing use

Reproduction for research or private study may be permitted. In cases where the materials are not in the public domain, their use in publications cannot be done without permission of the copyright holder(s).

### Finding aids

Box listings are available.

**Related material**

Guerin Family Fonds (P610), Mc Cord Museum, Montreal

**Accruals**

No further accruals are expected.

**Other notes**

- **Publication status:** Published
- **Level of detail:** Minimal
- **Status description:** Final
- **Rights:** Copyright has expired for most documents.

---

**Access points**

---

- Textual record (documentary form)
- Object (documentary form)
- Irish in Montreal (subject)