

Manuscript Sources in Women's History at the Historical Resource Center

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Recently the University of Minnesota Libraries, which is conducting a survey on manuscript collections in women's history, asked the manuscript curator at the Historical Resource Center to inform them of our manuscripts relating to women. Although eleven collections were reported at that time, and several since, the center undoubtedly has many additional collections not reported. Since only a third of our manuscripts have been cataloged to date, many collections pertaining to women's history have not yet been processed. It is hoped that by the spring of 1978, the remaining manuscripts will be processed and that a general guide to the entire collection will be published. Until then, it is difficult to determine exactly which collections are pertinent to women's history.

The problem of identifying sources in women's history is further compounded by the difficulty of distinguishing what the director of the Survey on Women's Sources describes as collections that contain "hidden women"—sources that include significant material on women, but whose main emphasis may not indicate the presence of such material. If these collections are cross-indexed in our center's manuscript catalog under

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"women," as some are, they are readily identifiable, but many collections are not. This failure may partly be the result of incomplete processing, but the problem of complete identification is actually much broader.

In a sense, our entire manuscript collection is centered around "hidden women." The economy of South Dakota is largely agricultural and the state's history reflects the predominance of this industry. The role of women in agricultural history has been too significant to be easily ignored. In the early development of agriculture in this state, for example, not only were individual women homesteaders themselves, but even when a woman accompanied her husband to the area, her role was no less important to history than her husband's. She may have worked in and around a sodhouse while her husband plowed, but her efforts contributed as much as her husband's to the eventual success or failure of the homestead.

The implication here is that it is not really important whether a homesteader was a man or a woman, but simply that both men and women were homesteaders and that both played equal roles in the establishment of South Dakota agriculture. The same can be said for other industries, professions, and pursuits. In education and in missionary work on the frontier and on reservations, the role of women and men is equally indistinguishable in South Dakota. These people were teachers or missionaries, not women missionaries or men teachers, and they are indexed accordingly in our catalog. Therefore, these individual women have been indexed by occupation and not by their sex.

Obviously, women have been excluded from industries and organizations in South Dakota, as they have been elsewhere. Women were largely excluded, for instance, from railroad development in this state. And while there were women lawyers, dentists, and politicians on the frontier, they were a rarity. As such, it is historically significant that few lawyers, dentists, and politicians were women; therefore, they have been indexed as "women." However, so many women were involved in South Dakota history overall that it is simply impractical to index these people as "women."

During recent years, the assumption that men alone were responsible for the settlement and establishment of the frontier

has been questioned by historians who believe that both men and women were involved, for example, in homesteading and missionary work. This change in attitude may be the most practical way to eliminate the large amount of indexing and cross-indexing that would be necessary to identify all women found in manuscript collections. But this change alone is not enough. As long as collections on women's history are not collected, publicized, and made easily available to researchers, women's history will not be written. It is with the hope of encouraging research in this field at the Historical Resource Center that the following list of sources on women's history has been compiled.

Three sources at the center were used to compile the list. The center's manuscript catalog is the first source, but, as already indicated, not necessarily the best. As a result, both the shelf list of processed collections and the accession list of unprocessed collections have been reviewed for additional sources. Since these two sources list collections by title alone, many collections containing information by or about women may have been missed because their titles would not indicate the existence of such material. While the following may not be a complete listing of sources available on women's history, it is the best research tool we can hope for at the present time.

PROCESSED COLLECTIONS: Collections have been listed in the order that they have been processed or accessioned.

H71.2 SHAKESPEARE AND ART CLUB OF MITCHELL,
 SOUTH DAKOTA, RECORDS, 1916-1971.

16 items

Organized for "the mutual improvement of members." Includes constitution, membership list, pamphlets and programs, and minutes.

H73.2 NATIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN SUFFRAGE
 ASSOCIATION LETTERS, 1897-1898.

14 items

Letters from Carrie Chapman Catt, Chairwoman of the Committee on Organizations,

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National American Woman Suffrage Association, and other suffrage leaders to Jane R. Breedon, a prominent suffrage worker in Pierre, S.D. Regarding problems in South Dakota.

H74.5 DICKENS CLUB OF PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, PAPERS, 1890-1956.

1½ linear feet

Minutes, 1890-1942. Papers, programs, and reports.

H74.16 WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT PAPERS, 1889-1925.

1 linear foot

Papers of the South Dakota Universal Franchise League and the South Dakota League of Women Voters. Includes miscellaneous papers, letters, minutes, and publications.

H74.22 JANE ROOKER BREEDEN PAPERS, 1870-1922.

1 linear foot

Correspondence, notes, manuscripts, and other papers relating to the woman suffrage and temperance movements in South Dakota and Illinois.

H74.30 WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS RECORDS, 1885-1910.

2 linear feet

The collection consists of various minute books, ledgers, cash books, receipts, requisitions, and letters from the W.R.C. Department of South Dakota, and several local organizations. Affiliated with the G.A.R.

See also: LAKE MADISON VETERAN ASSOCIATION LEDGER, 1887-1916. Includes a list of W.R.C. members who attended an annual encampment.

H74.60 U.S.O. SERVICEMEN'S COMMITTEE OF

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- PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, RECORDS,
1942-1945. 1 inch
Includes records, lists of members,
minutes (December 1942-July 1945).
- H74.70 OLIVE A. RINGSRUD PAPERS, 1938-1971. 1½ linear feet
Born in Union County, South Dakota, in
1892. Taught school for twenty-five years
before being elected in 1938 as Secretary of
State. Reelected in 1940. Defeated in Senate
primary in 1942. Includes correspondence,
scrapbooks, and newspaper clippings.
- H74.71 HAZEL BELLE ABBOTT PAPERS, n.d. 6 linear feet
Collection not cataloged.
Abbott (1889-1970) was born in Bon
Homme County, received her B.A. at
Yankton College, and her Ph.D. from
Columbia University. Taught there from
1924-1928. Devoted her last years to com-
piling a history of Bon Homme County.
- H74.80 DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION (SOUTH DAKOTA)
RECORDS, 1912-1966. ½ linear foot
Proceedings of the Annual Conference of
the South Dakota D.A.R., 1920-1946. Other
miscellaneous papers.
- H74.98 ELIZABETH C. BURNETT MANUSCRIPT,
1913-1939. 1 item
(68 pages)
"History of the Red Cross Seal Commis-
sion of South Dakota—South Dakota Health
Association—South Dakota Tuberculosis
Association."
- H74.109 PROHIBITION MOVEMENT PAPERS. 39 items
Miscellaneous papers, ca. 1910-1920.
Includes a petition.

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- H74.119 SOUTH DAKOTA SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION RECORDS, 1875-1947.
Minutes, 1875-1915. Programs and miscellaneous papers. $\frac{1}{2}$ linear foot
- H74.124 LEOLA CHRISTIAN MANUSCRIPT.
"History of South Dakota Branch of the King's Daughters and Sons, Years 1922-1961."
1 item
(15 pages)
- H74.133 MRS. E. M. (STURTEVANT) BISHOP PAPERS.
Miscellaneous papers and writings of Mrs. Bishop, concerning Huron and Fort Pierre.
100 items
(approx.)
- H74.138 GRACE (MRS. CALVIN) COOLIDGE LETTER, 1954
Discusses sculpture by Gutzon Borglum, and a trip to the Black Hills.
1 item
- H74.140 FANNY MCGILLYCUDDY DIARY, 1877-1878.
A diary, April 1877-October 1878, of day to day occurrences by the wife of Valantine T. McGillicuddy, an Army Officer stationed at Fort Robinson.
1 item
(19 pages)
- H75.10 HELEN MEIGS COLLECTION.
Letters, clippings, leaflets, and other papers concerning Mary C. Collins and South Dakota. ca. 1900.
30 items
- H75.48 CORA D. BABCOCK REMINISCENCES, 1880-1885.
A succinct account of five years of home-
4 items

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steading near Mitchell, South Dakota, by a lone woman.

- H75.68 ILMA KELLY LETTER: BELGIUM, 1918. 1 item
A long, detailed letter about Kelly's experiences as a nurse in World War I.
- H75.71 EMMA VIGNAL BORGLUM MANUSCRIPT, n.d.:
"THE EXPERIENCE AT CROW CREEK: A SIOUX INDIAN RESERVATION AT SOUTH DAKOTA."
1 item
A manuscript account of a four-month stay among the Sioux in 1899.
- H75.75 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH DAKOTA RECORDS, 1922-1970. 2 linear feet
Minutes, correspondence, and other material concerning the state organization and local leagues.
- H75.76 DAKOTA TERRITORY CENTENNIAL COMMISSION RECORDS, 1959-1962. 3 linear feet
Commission was organized to prepare for the coming Centennial of the organization of Dakota Territory. The second director of the Commission was a woman, Ms. Mary Lou Lund.
- H75.77 LUTHERAN MEMORIAL CHURCH RECORDS, PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, 1883-1968. 1 linear foot
Records, minutes, and other items of various Ladies' Aid societies.

UNPROCESSED COLLECTIONS: The titles of these collections may be changed when they are processed.

1. Women's Clubs Papers, Miscellaneous. 35 items
Programs, pamphlets, and brochures of various clubs.

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2. Elizabeth F. Cory Letters, 1909-1919. ½ linear
feet

Source for an article by Paul Corey, "Bachelor Bess: My Sister, Ten Years in the Life of a Country School Teacher and Homesteader, Who Went from Iowa to South Dakota in 1909, Narrated from Her Letters." *South Dakota Historical Collections*, volume 37, 1974.
3. "A Short Sketch of Mother Gertrude." 1 item

Mother Gertrude, a nun in the Benedictine Order, first taught at Standing Rock Agency, and eventually settled in Sioux City. ca. 1875-1900.
4. "Pioneer Life in Jackson County, South Dakota." 1 item
(6 pages)

Pioneering experiences of a woman on a homestead at the turn of the century.
5. Anna E. Card Williams Biography, 1876. 1 item
(2 pages)

Brief account of her life in Deadwood.
6. Orpha LeGro Haxby Manuscripts, 1876-1886. 2 items

Homesteading in the Black Hills, 1876. Description of a trip from Yankton to Rapid City area. Description of early Rapid City and attacks by Indians in the area. Accounts written in a response to a letter from elementary school children.
7. Adeline Miriam Jenny Papers, ca. 1900-1960. 10 items

Daughter of missionary parents. Editor of *Pasque Petals*, a journal of poetry, 1933ff. Proclaimed poet laureate of South Dakota in 1958 by the governor.
8. Women's Missionary Federation Proceedings, 1941 1 item

"Proceedings of the Women's Missionary Federation of the South Dakota District, N.L.C.A." Canton, South Dakota, 1941.
9. Mrs. Kathryn M. French, ca. 1900. 5 items

Speeches and addresses dealing with patriotism, children, and education.

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10. Mary C. Collins Papers, ca. 1880s. 15 items
Collins, a doctor and missionary, served on several Indian reservations in South Dakota.
11. Minerva Carter Diary, 1880s. 6 items
Homesteading near Eureka, 1887-1888.
12. Jeanne L. Wullemin Letter, n.d. 1 item
An account of a journey from Elgin, Illinois, in 1909, to Stanley County, South Dakota, and of homesteading.
13. Irene Cushman Diary, 1890-1908. 1 item
(109 pages)
Dated February 1889 to September 1891. Social life and social affairs in Deadwood.
14. "Lucie Emma Dickinson Lott, Her Story," 1880s. 1 item
Homesteading in the Jones Brook area.
15. Nina Margaret Foster Morris Recollections, n.d. 7 items
"Some recollections of the early years of Grandmother Brothers. Concerns three years as a preparatory student at Belleview College in Nebraska.
16. Matilda White Manuscript, 1876ff. 2 items
Manuscript composed in 1924 at the request of the director of the state historical society. Early years in the Black Hills.

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