

Women's history resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL041

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre

The University Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
AB24 3AA

Introduction

Many individuals and organisations have deposited their papers with the University and as a result, it has acquired an unrivalled collection of material, not solely relating to the history and culture of the north-east of Scotland but of national and international importance.

The collections comprise personal correspondence, journals, travel diaries, photographs and sound recordings; meeting minutes and papers created by organisations and papers created by educational institutions. There are papers created by women in their domestic role as well as in their careers as authors, doctors, philanthropists and poets.

The training of female teachers by the Aberdeen Church of Scotland Training College dates back to 1874 yet in contrast women were only admitted to the University in 1892. In 1894 the first twenty matriculated female students started their studies with the first graduation four years later.

Archival collections

University institutional papers

Aberdeen University Women's Centenary celebrations: 1994 (MS 3450).

Student's Representative Council, photograph of first women members: 1907 (UNIVERSITY 301/9/2/1).

Northern College of Education (formerly Aberdeen College of Education, Aberdeen Provincial Training Centre, Aberdeen Church of Scotland Training College and Aberdeen Free Church Training College. Also records of Practising/Demonstration Schools and Woolmanhill Emergency Physical Training Centre: 1874 – 2001 (UNIVERSITY 1421).

Women's Employment Federation;
British Federation of University Women:
1938 – 1955 (UNIVERSITY 729).

Family and estates papers

Fraser of Castle Fraser and Inverallochy including papers of Miss Elyza Fraser (1734-1814), Miss Marianne Mackenzie Fraser (1788-1852) and Helen Mackenzie Fraser (1790-1835): 16th century – 20th century (MS 3470).

Earls of Kintore including papers (scrapbooks of family life and of life in Australia) of Lady Sydney Charlotte Montagu, wife of Algernon Keith-Falconer, 9th Earl and Governor of South Australia. There are also papers of their daughters including travel journals: 19th century – 20th century (MS 3064).

Organisations' papers

Aberdeen Clarion Club papers (including women members and discussions regarding suffrage): 1899 – 1909 (MS 2467).

Aberdeen University Ladies Club: 1926-2004 (MS 3771).

Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild, Greyfriars Branch, Aberdeen: minutes: 1922 – 1944 (MS 3325).

Union of Women Workers: 1900 – 1926 (MS 2769/I/126).

Business papers

Aberdeen People's Press papers includes many relevant collected publications: 1969 – 1979 (MS 3025).

Personal papers

Bruce, Helen, author: 1930s – 1990s (MS 3836).

Carnegie, Susan Scott, philanthropist, see Alexander A. Cormack papers: 1765 – 1818 (MS 2937).

Duncan, Mrs. Isobel, of Banff: 1878 – 1893, Mrs Master William Duncan (MS 2526).

Esslemont, Mary, physician: 20th century (MS 3179).

Fraser, Olive, poet: 1920s – 1970s (MS 3336).

Gavin, Dr. Catherine, novelist: papers: 1923 – 1988 (MS 3616).

Glennie, Margaret and John: journals of trips around Scotland: 1825 – 1835 (MS 981).

Knight, Margaret, psychologist and humanist: papers: 20th century (MS 3133).

McKenzie, Agnes Mure, novelist: 1920 – 1955 (MS 2750).

Nicoll, Mildred Robertson, author and editor: 20th century (MS 3518).

Shire, Helena Mennie, literary scholar: papers: 1832 – 1990s (MS 3407).

Swan, Annie Shepherd, novelist: 1894 – 1946 (MS 3517).

Taylor, Rachel Annand, author and journalist: papers: 1899 – 1908 (MS 2742).

Wimberley (nee Irvine), Mary, diary (extracts) kept in India and England: 1825-1838: edited 1969 (MS 2724).

Oral history collections

University of Aberdeen Oral History Archive comprises nearly 200 interviews with individuals connected with the University (MS 3620) - of particular note are the interviews conducted with Dr Mary Esslemont, physician (MS 3620/1/1-3).

'Lives in the Oil Industry' Oral History Archive & associated records was a major collection of sound recordings which was completed between 2001 and 2006 and includes interviews with nearly 200 people, totalling nearly 800 hours of recordings (MS 3769). Of particular note is an interview with Lorna Robertson, trade union administrator (MS 3769/1/123).

Printed collections

The Local Collection, accessible via the Wolfson Reading Room, contains relevant printed material such as the student magazine *Alma Mater*. See also publications by the 'Aberdeen Colleges of Education', Aberdeen University Woman Suffrage Association and Aberdeen Ladies' Educational Association.

Access

Materials are available upon request for consultation in the Reading Room. Please search online catalogues to identify individual items.

Further reading

For further reading please also see the studies of a number of manuscripts, printed books and collections in the journals *Aberdeen University Library Bulletin*, *Aberdeen University Review* and *Northern Scotland*.

A number of the above papers were highlighted in: Beavan, Iain; Davidson, Peter; Stevenson, Jane. *Library and archive collections of the University of Aberdeen: an introduction and description*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press with the University of Aberdeen, 2011).

Anderson, R. D. *The Student Community at Aberdeen 1860-1939* (Aberdeen University Press, 1988).

McCall, Alison T. *Aberdeen School Board female teachers 1872-1901: a biographical list* (Aberdeen, 2007).

Moore, Lindy. *Bajanellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen University and the Education of Women 1860 – 1920* (Aberdeen, 1991).