

Guide to the Marian Parker Whitney Papers, 1842-1945 (bulk 1871-1945)

Biographical Note

Marian Parker Whitney (1861-1946), was an educator and daughter of the distinguished scholar, William Dwight Whitney. She was born in New Haven, CT, and attended private schools in this country and in Europe. She did graduate work at the Universities of Paris and Zurich and received a Ph.D. from Yale in 1901. After several years of teaching high school in New Haven, Miss Whitney became a professor of German at Vassar in 1905, serving as chairperson of the department for many years. One of her interests was the theater, and she introduced a popular course on contemporary comparative drama. She was author and editor of many French and German grammars and textbooks.

Miss Whitney's interests beyond Vassar were extensive. She was active in professional organizations of language teachers and in the American Association of University Professors. She was deeply concerned with improving women's social and political status. As a leading member of both the National and International Council of Women, Whitney visited Europe in 1919-1920 to study changes in women's education brought about by World War I. A supporter of separate education for women, Miss Whitney served as a trustee of Connecticut College for Women. Her death in 1946 followed a long illness.

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Scope and Content Note

Family correspondence includes letters received by her father William Dwight Whitney, 1842-1850; her correspondence with her parents, 1872-1891; and letters received from other family members, 1872-1900. Personal correspondence, 1871-1905, from Jennie and Fannie Bailey, Amanda Brewster, Honor Brooke, Beatrice Chamberlain, Eva Channing, Elizabeth Whitney Putnam, Marie Souvestre, Bessie M. Townsend, and Edith Woolsey concerning intellectual pursuits, travels, Brooke's work with a working girls' club in London (1889), family affairs, and other personal news. Papers from her Vassar position include minutes, reports, materials from her German and drama courses, correspondence with Presidents Taylor and MacCracken, and letters from students. Correspondence, programs, reports, bills, and other items from her work with the American Association of University Professors, the International Council of Women, the National Council of Women, Connecticut Association of Working Girls' Clubs, and other women's groups, 1919-1934. Scrapbooks, class notebooks, and several manuscripts, 1871-1891 and undated; diaries from 1873 to 1945; and correspondence and other materials from trips to Europe, England, and Japan, 1886-1920.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Marian Parker Whitney Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Original processing date unknown.

Acquisition Information

Gift of estate of Emily Whitney.

2 Whitney items were found in Carl Friedrich Gauss's Theoria Mutus Corporum... (Grille 521.3 G237) and added to Multiple Collections at an unknown time. They were transferred from there to the Whitney collection (folder 4.20), March 2007.

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Series I. Correspondence

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Series III. Women's organizations

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