

Guide to the Elsa Butler Grove Papers, 1921-1969

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Collection Summary

Repository:	Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries
Creator:	Grove, Elsa Butler, 1884-1969
Title:	Elsa Butler Grove Papers
Dates:	1921-1969
Quantity:	0.5 cubic feet (2 boxes)
Abstract:	The Elsa Butler Grove Collection contains correspondence, typescripts, printed materials and photographs. The most notable portions of the collection relate to her service in the Baltic States and work with the American Red Cross and the Vassar Unit in France during World War I. There is also material related to the proposed establishment of an archives at Vassar College, miscellaneous printed material, and some biographical material.

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Biographical Note

Elsa May Butler was born in St. Louis, Missouri on May 16, 1884, the daughter of William Borton and Marie Lange Butler. A 1905 graduate of Vassar College, Grove received her master's degree from the Washington University School of Social Work (1914) and was a fellow at Bryn Mawr (1915-1916). She later became a student at Columbia University Graduate School of Political Science where she studied

economics, sociology, and anthropology.

Elsa devoted much of her life to medical social work. During World War I, she was in charge of the Vassar College Red Cross welfare unit at Verdun, France (1918) and was decorated by the French government for her services. On June 14, 1921, Grove began an one-year position directing social work in child relief units in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania for the American Red Cross. During this period of service in the Baltic States, she took extensive notes on the conditions witnessed by the inhabitants of Latvia. Her observations provide the reader with an account of the difficulties of conducting health work overseas, in terms of those administering aid as well as those who are receiving the assistance.

Upon her return to the United States, Grove taught hospital service at Teacher's College of Columbia University, Fordham University, Dillard University, Smith College, and Mt. Sinai Hospital (1923-1942). She served as President of the Class of 1905, Vassar College (1935-1940) and was active in numerous professional societies, including the New York Urban League, the National Institute of Immigration Welfare and the American Association of Social Workers.

In preparation for Vassar's 100th Anniversary, Grove took a determined interest in the campaign for the establishment of a Women's Archives at Vassar College. It was her considered belief that the gathering of an extensive collection of materials relating to the role of women throughout history would serve as a valuable tool in the betterment of Vassar's academic resources.

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Scope and Content Note

Papers primarily concern her work with the American Red Cross and include correspondence, 1921-1924; her diary with entries about her Baltic experiences, 1921; typescript article about government, children, women, labor, and charity work in the Baltic States based on her work there, 1921-1922; photographs of Grove and of Verdun, 1936 and undated; and miscellaneous maps, booklets, and articles. Other items include eight letters relating to the proposed Vassar Archives, 1956; and her obituary, 1969. In addition, there is an unbound scrapbook containing, correspondence, notes, and photographs of her work with the Vassar Unit in France, 1919-1920.

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Subject Headings

Organizations:

- American Red Cross
- Vassar College. Vassar Archives

Subjects:

- Charities--Baltic States
- Children--Baltic States

- International relief
- Labor and laboring classes--Baltic States
- Medical social work--Europe
- Social work with children
- Women social workers
- Women--Baltic States
- Women--Diaries
- World War, 1914-1918--War work--Red Cross

Places:

- Baltic States--Politics and government
- Baltic States--Social conditions
- Estonia--Description and travel
- Latvia--Description and travel
- Lithuania--Description and travel
- Verdun (France)--Description--Views

Document Types:

- Diaries
- Maps
- Photographs

VCL Categories

- War and War Crimes

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Elizabeth Clarke, April 2007.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Elsa Butler Grove Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Original processing date unknown.

Container list updated by Laura Streett, April 2007.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Elsa Butler Grove.

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Series List

[Series I.](#) Correspondence (Box 1)

[Series II.](#) Unpublished Transcripts by Grove (Box 1)

[Series III.](#) Printed Materials (Box 1)

[Series IV.](#) Diary (Box 1)

[Series V.](#) Photographs (Box 1)

[Series VI.](#) Scrapbook (Box 2)

[Series VII.](#) Fragments (Box 2)

Container List

SERIES I. CORRESPONDENCE	
Letters Concerning the American Red Cross	
Folder 1.1	Letters from Grove, 1922-1924 (2 letters)
Folder 1.2	Letters to Grove, 1921-1922 (3 letters)
Letters Concerning Proposed Vassar Archives	
Folder 1.3	Letters from Grove, 1956 (3 letters)
Folder 1.4	Letters to Grove, 1956, n.d. (3 letters)
Folder 1.5	Letters to and from others, 1956 (2 letters)

SERIES II. UNPUBLISHED TYPESCRIPTS BY GROVE**Notes Re Baltic States During 1921-1922**

Folder 1.6	Outline of Notes (cc, 1p.)
Folder 1.6	"Letts" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.6	"Latvia" (TS, 4p.)
Folder 1.6	"Before the War" (TS, 5p.)
Folder 1.6	"The War" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.7	"Experiment in Government" (TS, 5p.)
Folder 1.7	"Municipal Bankruptcy" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.7	"The Policy of Self-Protection" (TS, 2 copies, 3p. each)
Folder 1.7	"Railroad Travel" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.8	"Fuel Situation" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.8	"Lettish Language" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.8	"Interpreters" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.8	"The Returning Population" (TS, 2 copies, 4p. each)
Folder 1.9	"Russians" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.9	"Widows" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.9	"Orphans" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.9	"Orphanages" (TS, 5p.)
Folder 1.9	"Schools" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.9	"University Students" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.10	"Rural Child Labor" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.10	"Unemployment" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.10	"Lettish Women's Corps" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.10	"Public Charities" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.10	"Lettish Private Organizations" (TS, 2p.)

Folder 1.11	"German Charities" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.11	"General Impressions" (cc, 2p.)
Folder 1.11	"American Contact" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.11	"The Attitude of the Letts Toward Foreign Charities" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.12	"Some Reflections on American Philanthropy Overseas" (TS, 15p.)
Folder 1.13	"Running an Office Overseas" (TS, 4p.)
Folder 1.13	"Case Work" (TS, 3p.)
Folder 1.13	"American Red Cross...Clothing Distribution in Latvia" (TS, 7p.)
Folder 1.13	"Lesson VII" (TS, 2p.)
Folder 1.13	"A Letter to the American Red Cross Commission" (TS, 1p.)
Folder 1.13	"General Conclusions Regarding Health Work Overseas" (cc, 2p.)
Folder 1.13	"Foreign Agencies" (TS, 2p.)
Biographical Information	
Folder 1.14	Experience outlines of Grove, 1954 (cc, 2p.)
Folder 1.14	Experience outlines of Grove, [1942] (TS, 5p.)
SERIES III. PRINTED MATERIALS	
Folder 1.15	Maps of the Baltic States, n.d. (2 maps, 1 w/ Xerox)
Folder 1.16	<i>The New Jersey Club Woman</i> , Vol. XXI, No. 4, December 1946
Folder 1.17	Foreign currency, n.d. (2 items)

Folder 1.17	Newspaper obituary, 1969 (1 article)
Folder 1.17	Passenger list for steamer to Rotterdam, 1921 (1 item)
Folder 1.17	"The Baltic Republics," 1922 (1 booklet)
SERIES IV. DIARY	
Folder 1.18	Date Book, 1921 (1 diary)
SERIES V. PHOTOGRAPHS	
Folder 1.19	Photos of Elsa Butler Grove, n.d. (4 photos)
Folder 1.20	Wartime and post-war snapshots, primarily of Verdun, France, 1936, n.d. (12 photos)
SERIES VI. SCRAPBOOK	
Folder 2.1	"Monsieur de Goeljen/Holland," 4 Aug- 25 Oct 1920
Folder 2.2	"Advice given bearing on work in France"
Folder 2.3	"Luxembourg"
Folder 2.4	[Work of Vassar Unit] - "Instructions of Committee," Feb-Nov 1919
Folder 2.5	"Correspondence from America"
Folder 2.6	"Publicity"
Folder 2.7	Photographs, Nov 1919 - Nov 1920
SERIES VII. FRAGMENTS	
Folder 1.21	Postcard, translation list, gift summary, certificate from ARC, 1924-1956, n.d. (4 items)

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▼ Details

Abstract

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