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Guide to the Edith Foster Flint Papers 1871-1964



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.FLINTEF
Title	Flint, Edith Foster. Papers
Date	1871-1964
Size	2.75 linear feet (6 boxes)
Repository	Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Edith Foster Flint (b. May, 13, 1873, d. February 22, 1948) was an alumna and one of the first women faculty members of the University of Chicago. Her academic career at the University's English Department continued from 1897 until her retirement in 1938. Flint served as Head of Kelly Hall, Chairperson of the Women's University Council, and President of the Chicago chapter of the American Association of University Women. The collection consists of Flint's correspondence with numerous individuals, in particular her family members, as well as personal and academic documents and memorabilia.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Flint, Edith Foster. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.

Biographical Note

Edith Burnham Foster was born on May 13, 1873 in Chicago as the second daughter of Dr. Richard Norman Foster and Annie Halsted Foster. Her father, Richard Norman Foster, was an obstetrician. Her older sister, Marion Foster Washburne (d. 1944) was a magazine editor and author of several books.

After attending the Brown Grammar School and the West Division High School, Edith Foster entered the University of Chicago's second class, graduating with a Bachelor of Philosophy

degree in 1897. Following her graduation, she became an Assistant in English at the University. From 1898-1900, she was promoted as Associate.

In 1899, she married Nott William Flint (1869-1906), an alumnus of the University (1898) and a faculty member of the English Department (1902-1906). Their two sons, Richard and Halsted, were born in 1902 and 1904, respectively. On February 22, 1906, Nott William Flint died as a consequence of a brain tumor. Later, Halsted Flint died of diphtheria as a young child in 1911. Richard Foster Flint (d. 1976) graduated from the University of Chicago and taught geology at Yale University for several decades.

First affiliated with the University's Extension Department, Edith Foster Flint continued her teaching in the Department of English as Instructor of English. She became an Assistant Professor in 1909, an Associate Professor in 1914, and full Professor in 1923, a post she held until her retirement in 1938. From 1931 to 1938, she directed English Composition in the College. Among her students who would later gain fame are the novelist Elizabeth Madox Roberts (d. 1941), the poet George Dillon (d. 1968), the author John Gunther (d. 1970), and the poet and novelist Glenway Wescott (d. 1987). Many of her students became scholars of English and held faculty positions in universities and colleges across the United States.

Edith Foster Flint held several administrative positions at the University of Chicago. She was Head of Kelly Hall (1898-1900), Dean in the College of Arts, Literature and Science (1918-1926), the Chairperson of Women's University Council (1925-1932), and elected twice President of the Chicago chapter of the American Association of University Women (ca. 1929).

Women's University Council, which Edith Foster Flint presided over from 1925-1932, had replaced the former office of Dean of Women in order to meet the needs of the growing number of the University's women students. The Council was composed of fifteen or more members from the women faculty.

Edith Foster Flint died in a car accident on February 22, 1948 in Santa Barbara, California, and was buried in Chicago's Oakwood Cemetery. She was remembered as an excellent speaker and splendid teacher with a warm and rich personality. The breadth and extent of her reading, especially her knowledge and memory of verse, ancient through modern, impressed students and colleagues alike. In 1963, the east unit of the New Women's Dormitory (also known as Woodward Court at 5828 Woodlawn Avenue) was named "Flint House" in honor of Edith Foster Flint. With the demolition of Woodward Court in 2002, the name "Flint House" was transferred to a section of Max Palevsky Residential Commons.

Scope Note

The collection mostly consists of correspondence of Edith Foster Flint, her family, friends, and relatives. Other materials and memorabilia are also preserved in the collection.

Series I, Correspondence, brings together these letters arranged chronologically. The earliest of these letters goes back to 1871, written by Dr. Richard Norman Foster and mentioning the death of his toddler child Albert. Another early letter contains the news of Edith's birth. Edith Foster's letters to and from her future husband Nott Williams Flint in 1899, especially while she was travelling in Europe, contain professional remarks related to the University and faculty. Letters from 1905 document Nott Flint's medication and surgery at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and decease. Edith Foster Flint's later European trips are also well documented in her correspondence with her family in the U.S. Most of the letters from the 1920s are Edith Foster Flint's correspondence with her son Richard Foster Flint and her daughter-in-law. Few letters by Edith Foster Flint are preserved after 1929, the last one being from 1947. Correspondence from 1963-1964 between Richard Foster Flint and the University of Chicago regarding the Flint House is also preserved in the collection.

Series II, General, consists of newspaper clippings, writings, personal cards, wedding invitations, photographs, academic papers, travel notes and memorabilia of the members of the Flint family. Of special note are a booklet describing three spiritual experiences by Richard Norman Foster, handwritten and typewritten compositions by Nott William Flint, and student assignments submitted to and briefly annotated by Edith Foster Flint. The folders in this series are arranged chronologically.

Related Resources

University of Chicago. Department of English Language and Literature. Records

University of Chicago. Women and Women's Organizations. Collection

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Harper, Judson and Burton Administrations. Records

Subject Headings

- University of Chicago
- University of Chicago. Department of English Language and Literature
- American Association of University Women
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INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1871-1881

Box 1

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1890-1898

Box 1

Folder 3

Correspondence, January-June 1899

Box 1

Folder 4

Correspondence, July 1899

Box 1

Folder 5

Correspondence, August 1899

Box 1

Folder 6

Correspondence, September 1899

Box 1

Folder 7

Correspondence, October-December 1899

Box 1

Folder 8

Correspondence, 1900

Box 1

Folder 9

Correspondence, 1901

Box 2

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1902

Box 2

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1903

Box 2

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1904

Box 2

Folder 4

Correspondence, 1905

Box 2

Folder 5

Correspondence, 1906

Box 2

Folder 6

Correspondence, 1907

Box 3

Folder 1

Correspondence, 1908

Box 3
Folder 2
Correspondence, 1909
Box 3
Folder 3
Correspondence, 1910
Box 3
Folder 4
Correspondence, 1911
Box 3
Folder 5
Correspondence, 1912
Box 3
Folder 6
Correspondence, 1914
Box 3
Folder 7
Correspondence, 1916
Box 3
Folder 8
Correspondence, 1917
Box 3
Folder 9
Correspondence, 1918
Box 3
Folder 10
Correspondence, 1919
Box 3
Folder 11
Correspondence, 1921
Box 4
Folder 1
Correspondence, 1922
Box 4
Folder 2
Correspondence, 1923
Box 4
Folder 3
Correspondence, January-June 1924
Box 4
Folder 4
Correspondence, July-December 1924
Box 4
Folder 5
Correspondence, January-July 1925
Box 4

Folder 6

Correspondence, August-December 1925

Box 4

Folder 7

Correspondence, January-June 1926

Box 5

Folder 1

Correspondence, July-December 1926

Box 5

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1927

Box 5

Folder 3

Correspondence, 1928

Box 5

Folder 4

Correspondence, January-June 1929

Box 5

Folder 5

Correspondence, July-December 1929

Box 5

Folder 6

Correspondence, 1937-1947

Box 5

Folder 7

Correspondence, 1963-1964

Box 5

Folder 8

Correspondence, undated

Series II: General

Box 6

Folder 1

Nott William Flint, 1897-1906

Box 6

Folder 2

Edith Foster Flint, 1899-1947

Box 6

Folder 3

Student Papers, 1905-1924

Box 6

Folder 4

Richard Norman Foster, 1915-1922

Box 6

Folder 5

Richard Foster Flint and Margaret Flint, 1925-1929

Box 6

Folder 6

European Trips' Memorabilia, 1926-1929

Box 6

Folder 7

Newspaper clipping and flyers, 1928

Box 6

Folder 8

Chapter from an anonymous memoir, undated