

Marian Williams Perrin diaries

Ms. Coll. 734

Finding aid prepared by Kelin Baldrige (cataloged by Amey Hutchins).

Last updated on November 10, 2016.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2016 November 10

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Perrin, Marian Williams, 1869-
Title	Marian Williams Perrin diaries
Call number	Ms. Coll. 734
Date [inclusive]	1886-1889
Extent	3 volumes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Marian Williams Perrin Burton (1869-1959) was a graduate of Wellesley College and a prominent anti-suffragist from New York State. This collection contains three journals, with each volume covering one year and each page printed to hold two dated entries from 1886, 1887, and 1889. These diaries primarily concern her preparation for and time at Wellesley College but also include daily events, literary quotes, and details of illnesses.</p>

Cite as:

Marian Williams Perrin diaries, 1886-1889, Ms. Coll. 734, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Marian Williams Perrin Burton was born on August 23, 1869, in Titusville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, the daughter of oil producer Andrew Norton Perrin and Belinda S. Williams. Burton graduated from Wellesley College in 1891 and married Henry Fairfield Burton in 1898. Together, they had three children, Andrew Perrin (b. 1899), Sarah Fairfield (b. 1900), and Henry Fairfield (b. 1901). Marian Williams Perrin Burton was a prominent anti-suffragist and served as the president of the Rochester auxiliary of Monroe County of anti-suffragists and gave anti-suffrage speeches at events such as the 1915 New York State Fair. Burton also lectured on topics such as English novel, household economics, and literature for children. She wrote miscellaneous articles for magazines and newspapers and was a member of the board of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the Board of Women's Education.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains three matching bound volumes, commercially-printed journals, with each volume covering one year and each page printed to hold two dated entries. The diaries were Christmas gifts from Marian's father, who in the first year checked to see whether Marian was doing her "journal work." The 1886 diary documents the spring semester of Marian's senior year after being out with typhoid fever and a fall and winter of preparing for college with Anna Phillips, a Wellesley graduate, as a private tutor in mathematics, Latin, and Greek. Entries describe schoolwork and classes, family participation at the Baptist church, food, dresses, and social activities.

The 1887 diary continues the account of Marian's preparation for college with Anna Phillips and describes her first semester at Wellesley, including classwork, lectures and sermons given by notable visitors, social activities, and Christmas back in Titusville. The end flyleaf for the 1887 diary contains a list of books, mostly novels, read during the first part of the year, with brief opinions noted.

As the 1889 diary opens, Marian travels to Wellesley from the Perrin family's new home in Rochester, New York; the spring semester of her sophomore year is cut short when she is called home because her father is ill, but she returns in the fall for her junior year. Many of the summer and fall entries in the 1889 journal are simply quotations, but December's entries are largely taken up with her preparation for a debate in which she would defend the resolution, "That the courses of study adapted to the needs of men's colleges are equally well adapted to the needs of women's colleges." Small ink drawings occasionally accompany entries, especially in the 1887 journal. Occasional notes in blue ballpoint pen were added when Marian re-read her diaries in 1953 at the age of 83 (see entry for March 23, 1889).

Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Michael Brown Rare Books (Philadelphia), 2009.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Wellesley College.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Diaries

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Rochester (N.Y.)--Social life and customs--19th century
- Titusville (Pa.)--Social life and customs--19th century
- United States--Intellectual life--19th century

SUBJECT(S)

- Education
- Manners and customs
- Women
- Women college students--United States--Social life and customs
- Women--Education--United States--History--19th century

Collection Inventory

	Volume
1886.	1
1887.	2
1889.	3