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0257: Martha Elizabeth Carpenter Miller Collection, 1898-1962

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MARTHA CARPENTER MILLER COLLECTION
1898-1962

Accession Number: 1979/06.0257

Processed By: Amanda Shaver

Date Completed: July 3, 2019

Location: Special Collections Department, Morrow Library

Corporate Name: N/A

Date: 1898-1962

Extent: 2 linear feet

System of Arrangement: This collection was partially processed at an earlier date, but no finding aid was made, and original order was unknown. Some items had been placed within folded pieces of acid-free copy paper, and have been kept as such under the assumption that they were originally bound or clipped together. The poetry has been divided into alphabetical sections, presumably filed this way by the author, and some poems have been individually filed with their multiple edits/editions. The remaining poetry has been categorized by typed or handwritten, and dated or undated.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Martha Elizabeth Carpenter was born on May 16, 1881 in Lawrence County, Ohio to William and Diantha (Bowen) Carpenter and attended Marshall College, graduating in 1898. She married William Thomas Miller in Catlettsburg, KY in 1899. The couple lived in Huntington, WV and had four children (Forrest, Leon, Kenneth, and Maxine). Martha Carpenter Miller was a prolific writer of poetry and verse, and was a member and served on the Advisory Board of the Huntington Poetry Guild and was a Parton of *Echoes of West Virginia: A Magazine of Verse* and member of the West Virginia Poetry Society. She regularly contributed to the

poetry column of Huntington's *The Herald-Advertiser*. Mrs. Miller also wrote about religious issues, and had pieces published in *The Church Advocate and Holiness Banner* of Fort Scott, Kansas in 1910 and in editions of *The Converted Catholic Evangelist: A Protestant Missionary Magazine* from the years 1911-1914. She attended Beverly Hills Methodist Church. In her handwritten poetry, Mrs. Miller indicated that some was written while at the C&O Hospital, and some, from the 1930's, is labeled "Gallaher School." Mrs. Miller also sold cosmetics for Avon during her life. Martha Carpenter Miller died on December 8, 1962.¹ The collection was donated to Marshall University by her daughter, Maxine Miller Hoke in 1979.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE COLLECTION

The majority of this collection consists of the handwritten and typed poetry of Martha Carpenter Miller. Many of the poems underwent multiple edits and rewrites, and her notes and corrections to her poems are included in this collection. The collection spans the years 1898-1962, with the bulk of the material from the 1930s-1950s. Miller wrote extensively, and the collection includes poems and partial poems, ideas, and short verses written on scrap paper, envelopes, paper towels, cardboard, postcards, and various other types of paper. At the time of processing, original order was largely unknown. In organizing the materials, there were occasionally found multiple drafts of certain poems. These were segregated and filed individually, but due to the extent of the collection, these individual files may not include all the versions of the poem; only those that were found in relative proximity to each other. Handwritten and typed poetry containing dates were segregated into individual folders by decade. The bulk of Mrs. Miller's handwritten poetry and verse was undated, however, resulting in multiple files of notes, drafts, and partially edited poems. During processing, multiple typed and unedited copies of the same poem were occasionally found. Three copies were kept, and the rest discarded.

While the bulk of the collection is Miller's poetry, it also contains a notebook and ten textbooks from Mrs. Miller's school days at Marshall College, a photo of her 1898 graduating class, her 1899 marriage certificate to William Miller, and materials relating to her religious activity, including four copies of the 1910 *The Church Advocate and Holiness Banner* from Fort

¹ Some information from the biographical section comes from an article, "Mrs. Miller Is Taken by Death At Age of 81" printed in the *Huntington Advertiser*, Saturday, December 8, 1962.

Scott, Kansas and editions of *The Converted Catholic Evangelist: A Protestant Missionary Magazine* from the years 1911-1914 in which some of her early writings (not poetry) were published. A November 25, 1955 edition of *Collier's* magazine was originally included within the collection, but it contained no material by Martha Carpenter Miller and so was discarded.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: The following books were the textbooks of Martha Carpenter Miller during her studies at Marshall College. Newspaper clippings and scraps of paper with notes were found within some of the books, and they have been removed and placed in a folder (Box 3, Folder 8). The books have been moved to the rare book room.

Cooley, LeRoy C., *Physics: The Student's Manual for the Study Room and Laboratory*, New York: American Book Company, 1897.

Halleck, Reuben Post, *Psychology and Psychic Culture*, New York: American Book Company, 1895.

Holder, Charles Frederick and Joseph Bassett Holder, *Elements of Zoölogy*, New York: American Book Company, 1885.

Irving, Washington, *Ten Selections From the Sketch-Book*, New York: American Book Company, 1892.

Meiklejohn, J.M.D., *A Brief History of the English Language and Literature*, Boston: D.C. Heath & Co., Publishers, 1896.

Shakespeare, William, *The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark*. New York: American Book Company, 1895.

Steele, Joel Dorman and Esther Baker Steele, *A Brief History of Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern Peoples*, New York: American Book Company, 1883. (This book is damaged, and no longer has a back cover.)

Steele, Joel Dorman and Esther Baker Steele, *A Brief History of the United States*, New York: American Book Company, 1885.

Various Authors, *Masterpieces of American Literature*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1891.

Wood, Alphonso and Oliver R. Willis, *The New American Botanist and Florist*, New York: American Book Company, 1889.

I. **Box 1: Poetry and Related Material**

Folder 1: Poetry Notebook- Poems A-B

Folder 2: Poetry Notebook- Poems C-D

Folder 3: Poetry Notebook- Poems E-F

Folder 4: Poetry Notebook- Poems G-H

Folder 5: Poetry Notebook- Poems I-K

Folder 6: Poetry Notebook- Poems L-N

Folder 7: Poetry Notebook- Poems O-P

Folder 8: Poetry Notebook- Poems R-S

Folder 9: Poetry Notebook- Poems T-U

Folder 10: Poetry Notebook- Poems V-Z

Folder 11: "Between The Days" by Martha Carpenter Miller

***The following folders (12-45) contain individual poems, often with multiple editions/edits.**

Folder 12: April Weather

Folder 13: Cherry Blossom Time

Folder 14: Confirmation

Folder 15: Corregidor

Folder 16: D-Day (The Invasion)

Folder 17: Forsythia Blooms Again

Folder 18: Friendship

Folder 19: Futile Retrospection

Folder 20: He Is Risen

Folder 21: High Flight

Folder 22: I Met A Pilgrim

Folder 23: Lines To Marshall College

Folder 24: Music Of The Night

Folder 25: My Heart Refuses To Sing

Folder 26: My Mother
Folder 27: The Natural Bridge
Folder 28: Night
Folder 29: Ode To A Sycamore
Folder 30: On To Berlin
Folder 31: Patterns In Lace
Folder 32: Pearl Harbor
Folder 33: Playing The Game
Folder 34: Retrospection
Folder 35: Snow
Folder 36: A Song For Linda Joy
Folder 37: The Spirit Of Jefferson
Folder 38: Spring Harbingers
Folder 39: The Storm
Folder 40: Symphony Of The Sea
Folder 41: A Vase
Folder 42: The Waiting Christ
Folder 43: West Virginia
Folder 44: Who Touched Me
Folder 45: Wings Over Berlin

***The following folders contain poetry organized by Mrs. Miller in a folio or notebook, by date, and/or typed or handwritten.**

Folder 46: Notebook of poems by Miller
Folder 47: Poems that appear in folio
Folder 48: Poems that appear in folio
Folder 49: Extra Copies of Poems, Typed
Folder 50: Poetry Submissions
Folder 51: Miller's Desk Diary, Mostly Poems
Folder 52: Typed, Undated Poems
Folder 53: Typed, Undated Poems with Edits or Notes
Folder 54: Written and Typed Poems

Folder 55: 1934 Typed, dated poem, "Question"

Folder 56: 1940-1949 Typed, dated poems

Folder 57: 1950-1959 Typed, dated poems

Folder 58: 1960-1962 Typed, dated poems

Folder 59: 1910-1919 Handwritten, dated poems

Folder 60: 1930-1939 Handwritten, dated poems

Folder 61: 1940-1949 Handwritten, dated poems

Folder 62: 1950-1959 Handwritten, dated poems

Folder 63: 1960-1962 Handwritten, dated poems

Folder 64: Handwritten Inventory of Poems

***The remaining folders in this box (65-75) contain undated, handwritten poetry, drafts, and edits. Occasionally, papers contained in folded, acid-free copy paper may have dates, or be typed, but because the assumption is that these papers were originally clipped or bound together, individual papers which might fit other criteria (dated, typed) have not been removed.**

Folder 65: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 66: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 67: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 68: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 69: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 70: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 71: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 72: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 73: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 74: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 75: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

II. **Box 2: Poetry and Non-poetry Related Material**

Folder 1: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 2: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 3: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

Folder 4: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts

- Folder 5: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts
- Folder 6: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts
- Folder 7: Handwritten, undated poetry and drafts
- Folder 8: Calendar with handwritten poems
- Folder 9: Books of Poetry which include poems by Miller
- Folder 10: Poems by Kenneth and Maxine Miller, children
- Folder 11: Poems by other authors
- Folder 12: Poets' Crossroads Newsletter
- Folder 13: Poetry Lessons, Instructions
- Folder 14: Newspaper Clippings, copies
- Folder 15: Newspaper Clippings*

*This folder includes two letters to the editor of the Huntington newspaper *Herald Dispatch* regarding the presence of L. J. King in the city. King was known for his speeches denouncing the Catholic church. One piece was authored by T. S. Scanlon and has no date, the other from "A True Friend of God's People" is dated September, 1909.

- Folder 16: Greeting Cards, Correspondence
- Folder 17: Personal Notes, including timeline and notes on household phenomenon and mysterious noises*

*Note: Mrs. Miller documented hearing noises, including voices, knocks, and steps, within her home. Some notes are dated 1957, 1959, and 1961, while others are undated. The timeline documents the years 1916-1948.

III. **Box 3: Religious, Temperance, Marshall College, and Other Materials**

- Folder 1: *The Church Advocate and Holiness Banner*, Fort Scott, Kansas; clippings with articles by Martha Miller, 1910
- Folder 2: Church/Religious Material
- Folder 3: Religious Writings by Miller
- Folder 4: *The Converted Catholic Evangelist: A Protestant Missionary Magazine* with articles by Miller*

*This magazine was edited by the aforementioned L. J. King.

- Folder 5: Works on Alcohol, including 1950 *The White Ribbon* WV WCTU paper, handout, and Miller piece

Folder 6: Photos

Folder 7: Marshall College Notebook, 1898*

*Note: This notebook was found among Mrs. Miller's Marshall textbooks, and contains notes from her courses on education. The back of the notebook also contains yearbook-type messages from friends, written during her last days at Marshall in 1898. The paper of the messages would then be folded up, and an opening date/time written on the outside of the paper. For example, one says "Open Feb. 12th 1899," with the note inside written on May 2, 1898. Others have instructions such as "Open this anytime after school close when you feel as I do-to [sic] hot to do anything. D. M." Nine messages at the back of the bunch have been opened, to give the reader a general idea of their contents. The rest of the messages have been left folded, so that their original form can be seen.

Folder 8: Notes from Textbooks

Folder 9: Artwork and Music, not by Miller

Also contained within Box 3:

- Two (2) rolls of multiple sheets of handwritten poetry. These sheets of poetry were found like this, and rather than try to press them flat, they were kept rolled.
- Marriage Certificate of William Miller and Martha Carpenter, both of Huntington, WV. They were married in Catlettsburg, KY on May 8, 1899. Witnesses listed as Bertha Stanley, Minnie Davenport, and Rev. T. R. Gillispie M. E. Church South. The certificate was already rolled when the collection was processed, and rather than try to press it flat, it was kept in its original state.