

Mary Payne Cowan Diaries, 1890-1896

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Cowan, Mary Payne, 1855-1933
Title	Mary Payne Cowan Diaries
Dates	1890-1896 1890 1896
Quantity	.1 linear feet
Collection Number	Collection 637, MtBC, us (collection)
Summary	Mary Payne Cowan Diaries consist of typed diary transcriptions that begin with her residence in New York State (1890-1891), documents the Cowan's trip to Malta, Montana, establishing a home, teaching school in Malta, and experiences with ranching. Subjects include various ranch chores, sheep, illnesses, weather conditions, entertainments, and candid observations regarding family relations.
Repository	Montana State University Library, Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections Montana State University-Bozeman Library Merrill G Burlingame Special Collections P.O. Box 173320 Bozeman, MT 59717-3320 Telephone: 406-994-4242 Fax: 406-994-2851 spcoll@www.lib.montana.edu
Access Restrictions	This collection is open for research.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities

Biographical Note

Mary Jayne Payne was born on April 6, 1855 in Schoharie County, New York. She married Lewis Brockway on January 12, 1874 at Stamford, New York, and the couple had three children, Mabel (born 1876), Sidney (born 1879) and Fred (born 1881). In August, 1891, Mary divorced Lewis and, the following December, married Arthur J. Cowan. In 1893 Mary, Arthur, and the three children moved to Phillips County, Montana where Arthur's brothers had settled the previous year. They first lived in Malta, where Mary taught school. In October 1893 they moved to a home on a sheep ranch established by Arthur's brothers near Woody Island Creek, Blaine County, and remained there until 1903. The couple then moved to Harlem where Arthur opened a butcher shop and served as a bank director. Arthur died sometime after 1930 and Mary died on January 23, 1933.

Content Description

Typed transcriptions of Mary Cowan's diaries begin with her residence in New York State (1890-1891) and describe her daily life in very brief entries which mention numerous local people and weather conditions. There is no diary for 1892. The 1893 diary documents the Cowan's trip to Malta, Montana via the railroad and her initial experiences establishing a home and teaching school in Malta. Entries following the family's removal to Woody Island Creek describe Mary's experiences on the ranch. Subjects include various ranch chores, sheep, illnesses, weather conditions, entertainments, and candid observations regarding family relations.

NEW: Click on the folder listings for PDF scans of the entire content of this collection.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

An original diary kept during 1895 by Mary Payne Cowan was loaned to Special Collections for transcription by Louis Petrie of Turner, Montana on October 9, 1968. The diary was returned to him after transcription by library personnel. Additional typed transcripts of Mary Cowan diaries dated 1890, 1891, 1893, 1894, and 1896 were prepared by Mrs. Allan Murray of Ogden, Utah and loaned to Special Collections for photocopying on November 18, 1981 and April 2, 1982.

Processing Note

This collection was processed 2009 September 9

Detailed Description of the Collection

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1	Diary	1890
1/2	Diary	1891
1/3	Diary	1893
1/4	Diary	1894
1/5	Diary	1895
1/6	Diary	1896

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Railroad travel-United States
Ranch life-Montana-Blaine County
Schools-Montana-Malta
Sheep ranches-Montana-Blaine County
Women teachers-Montana-Malta-Diaries
Women-Montana-Blaine County-Diaries
Women-New York (State)-Diaries

Personal Names :

Cowan, Arthur J., d. 1946
Cowan, Mary Payne, 1855-1933-Diaries

Geographical Names :

Malta (Mont.)
Woody Island Creek (Mont.)

Form or Genre Terms :

Diaries-Montana
Diaries-New York (State)

Other Creators :**Personal Names :**

Murray, Allan, Mrs
(creator)

Corporate Names :

Montana State University (Bozeman, Mont.)-Library
(creator)

Kim Allen Scott, 2009