

Ella Higginson Papers, 1870-1940

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Higginson, Ella
Title	Ella Higginson Papers
Dates	1870-1940 (inclusive) 1870 1940 1880-1940 (bulk) 1880 1940
Quantity	12 linear feet
Collection Number	XOE_CPNWS0007higginson (collection)
Summary	The collection contains correspondence, writings, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, photographs and artifacts documenting the life and work of Northwest writer and poet Ella Higginson. Records include drafts and copies of Higginson's published and unpublished novels, screenplays, short stories and poems. Newspaper Clippings and Scrapbooks also include copies of articles, short stories and poems written by Higginson, reviews and articles regarding Higginson and her work.
Repository	Western Washington University, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies Goltz-Murray Archives Building 808 25th St. Bellingham, WA 98225 Telephone: 360-650-7534 cpnws@wwu.edu
Access Restrictions	The collection is open to the public.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for preparing this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the Washington State Legislature to the Washington Women's History Consortium. Funding for encoding the finding aid was awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Northwest poet and writer Ella Higginson (1861-1940) was born Ella Rhoads in Council Grove, Kansas. She moved to Oregon with her parents as an infant, spending her youth in Portland and Oregon City. She attended public school in Oregon, and also received private lessons from Oxford trained S.D. Pope, then one of the most renowned educators on the West coast. In 1885, Ella married Russell C. Higginson (1852-1909) in Portland Oregon. The couple moved to Bellingham, Washington (then the town of Sehome) in 1888, where they opened a drug store on Elk Street. It was during this period that Higginson's writing career began to flourish, with her poetry and short stories published nationally by journals including McClures, Harper's Monthly, and Colliers. Her best known work, a poem entitled "Four Leaf Clover," was first published by West Shore Magazine in 1890. Higginson's novels and collections of short stories include Mariella-Of-Out-West, Alaska the Great Country, The Flower that

Grew in the Sand, From the Land of Snow Pearls, and The Forest Orchid and Other Stories. In June 1931, she was made poet laureate of Washington State.

Higginson was actively involved in community and civic affairs. She helped establish Bellingham's first public reading room and library (of which she became a long-time board member), and also retained an active interest in Whatcom County Normal School (later Western Washington University). Higginson was deeply concerned with issues affecting women, including female education and the institution of marriage. In a 1889 article in *West Shore*, she argued that the "real evil was not that divorce was too easy, but that marriage was too easy, and that there should be a law preventing marriage before the age of thirty, especially if the woman was homeless."* She was an honorary member of societies including the Progressive Literary and Fraternal Club, the Bellingham Soroptimists and the Washington State Federation of Women's Clubs. Higginson was also the campaign manager for Mrs Frances C. Axtell, elected as the first female member of Washington State's House of Representatives in 1912. Higginson died in Bellingham, Wash. on December 27, 1940.

*Cited in Koert, Dorothy. *The Lyric Singer: A Biography of Ella Higginson*. Bellingham, Washington:Center for Pacific Northwest Studies & Fourth Corner Registry,1985.page 52.

Content Description

The Higginson papers contain correspondence, manuscripts, clippings, scrapbooks, photographs and artifacts documenting the life and work of Northwest writer and poet Ella Higginson. Records in the collection span the period circa 1870s-1940, with the bulk of material dated from 1880 onwards. Correspondence includes letters from publishers and contemporary writers including Lloyd Mifflin regarding Higginson's work and its publication. Higginson's writings include drafts of her published and unpublished novels, screenplays, short stories and poetry, including manuscripts of *Mariella Of Out-West*, and *Alaska the Great Country*. Researchers should note that many of these drafts are partial or incomplete. The collection also contains a small number of short stories and poems written by Higginson's sister, Carrie Blake Morgan.

Newspaper clippings dated circa 1880-1920 include copies of short stories, poems and articles written by Higginson, and also reviews and articles about her life and work. Scrapbooks compiled by Higginson (1897 – 1909) also contain similar clippings, and copies of her poems. The collection also contains photographic prints and negatives of Ella Higginson, family and friends. Artifacts include printing blocks with images of Ella, her signature stamp, and copies of the words and music for her *Four Leaf Clover* poem.

Use of the Collection

Preferred Citation

Ella Higginson Papers, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham WA 98225-9123.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The Ella Higginson Papers are organized in accordance with the following series and sub-series arrangement:

- Series I. Correspondence circa 1890-1940
- Series II. Higginson's Writings undated
 - Sub-series 1. Novels
 - Sub-series 2. Screenplays
 - Sub-series 3. Short Stories
 - Sub-series 4. Poetry
- Series III. Writings by Carrie Blake Morgan, undated
- Series IV. Newspaper Clippings circa 1879-1920
- Series V. Scrapbooks circa 1897 - 1909
- Series VI. Photographs circa 1870-1920s
- Series VII. Ephemera, 1904, undated
- Series VIII. Artifacts, undated

Custodial History

The Bellingham Public Library donated materials in the Higginson Papers to the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies in May, 1998. The Bellingham Public Library previously received the materials in 1944 as a bequest from the Higginson estate.

Processing Note

John Flancher completed initial processing of the Ella Higginson Papers for the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies in 1998. In 2003, Ruth Steele re-engineered the collection.

Bibliography

Koert, Dorothy. *The Lyric Singer: A Biography of Ella Higginson*. Bellingham, Washington: Center for Pacific Northwest Studies & Fourth Corner Registry, 1985.

Related Materials

Folder 4/4 (Ella Higginson Probate File & Chronological Summary) in the CPNWS Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection is related to The Ella Higginson Papers at the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies.

Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Series I: Correspondence , circa 1890-1940

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Incoming		
Box/Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/1	General	1890-1910
1/2	General	1911-1940
1/3	General	undated
1/4	MacMillan Co. Publishers	1897-1910; 1940
1/5	Mifflin, Lloyd	1898; 1905

Box/Folder

1/6	Outgoing	1893-1939; undated
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Series II: Higginson's Writings, Undated

Contain drafts and copies of novels, screenplays, short stories and poetry written by Ella Higginson. Researchers should note drafts of Higginson's works are often partial and incomplete. Almost all of these writings are undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Subseries 1: Novels	Undated
	Mariella; of Out-West	

Box/Folder

2/1 - 2/2	Draft I	undated
2/3 - 2/5	Draft II	undated
3/1 - 3/3	Draft II (continued)	undated
3/4	Draft III	undated
3/5 - 3/6	Draft IV	undated
3/7	Draft Fragments	undated
4/1	Galley Proofs	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Alaska, the Great Country		
Box/Folder		
5/1	Handwritten draft	undated
6/1	Handwritten draft (continued)	undated
7/1 - 7/7	Handwritten draft	undated
8/1 - 8/3	Typed draft	undated
8/4 - 8/8	Draft Fragments	undated
9/1	Travel Journal	undated
Orilla		
Box/Folder		
9/2 - 9/3	Draft Fragments	undated
Subseries 2: Screenplays		Undated
Box/Folder		
9/4	Just Like the Men [view]	undated
9/5 - 9/6	Rose in My Heart (draft fragments)	undated
9/7	A Political Story	undated
Subseries 3: Short Stories		Undated
Box/Folder		
10/1 -10/11	untitled short stories	undated
10/12 - 10/14	untitled short story fragments	undated
11/1	Mr Slover	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
11/2	The Fiddling Mate of the Santa Anna	undated
11/3	The Little Girl From the Lighthouse	undated
11/4	The Rejuvenation of Mrs. Roop 1	undated
11/5	A Point of Giving In	undated
11/6	The Woman That Came to Karluk	undated
11/7	Avenelle of the Mountains	undated
11/8	A True Story	undated
11/9	A Socialistic Flower	undated
11/10	The Philadress	undated
11/11	The Man Who Stayed	undated
11/12	The Last Furrow	undated
11/13	Extra Pure Woman	undated
11/14	One O Them Still Stubborn Kinds	undated
11/15	A Study in Gossip	undated
11/16	A Case of Municipals	undated
11/17	M'liss's Child	undated
11/18	His Great Hour	undated
11/19	The Candle of God	undated
11/20	The Trembling Heart	undated
11/21	Euphemy	undated
11/22	The Mate of the Santa Anna	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
11/23	A Perfectly Model Man	undated
11/24	Entertaining the Editor	undated
12/1	The Other Woman	undated
12/2	The Message From God	undated
12/3	For So Much Heaven	undated
12/4	The Wooing of Delisca	undated
12/5	The Supreme Hour	undated
12/6	The Russo-Greek Churches of Alaska	undated
12/7	Alaska: The Dream Voyage	undated
12/8	The Lavender Westward	undated
12/9	Mis' Bunnel's Funeral	undated
12/10	Mandy's Organ	undated
12/11	Mrs. Ousley's Haviland China	undated
12/12	The Anspiker Chickens	undated
12/13	Belindy's One Beau	undated
12/14	Hearts and Hearts	undated
12/15	Stories for Anthology (collection)	undated
13/1	Dove Colored Door	undated
13/2	A Change of Creed	undated
13/3	The Miracle of the North	undated
13/4	A Perfectly Model Man	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
13/5	The Violin	undated
13/6	The Stubbornness of Uriah Slater	undated
13/7	Clarissa	undated
13/8	The Weaver	undated
13/9	The Message of Anna Laura Sweet	undated
13/10	The Great Birthright	undated
Subseries 4: Poetry		Undated
<i>Box/Folder</i>		
13/11 - 13/16	Poems	undated
13/17	Poems (printed copies, labeled "Not in Books")	undated
13/18	Published and illustrated poems	undated
13/19	Published Poem Book <i>The Vanishing Race and Other Poems</i>	1911

Series III: Writings by Carrie Blake Morgan, Undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<i>Box/Folder</i>		
14/1	Short Stories	undated
14/2	Poems by and from C. Blake Morgan	undated

Series IV: Newspaper Clippings , circa 1879-1920

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Clippings written by Ella Higginson		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
14/3	Articles	circa 1905-1937
14/4	Poems	1906, ; undated
14/5	Short Stories	circa 1879-1888
Oversize Folder		
1	Short Stories	circa 1881-1920
Box/Folder		
14/6	Short Stories	undated
Box/Folder		
14/7	Articles about Ella Higginson	circa 1902-1936
14/8	Reviews	circa 1902-1903, ; undated
14/9	Obituaries	1940
14/10	Frank Teck clippings	1903, ; undated

Series V: Scrapbooks, circa 1897 - 1909

Scrapbooks contain clippings and copies of Higginson's poetry and articles, as well as articles and reviews about Higginson and her work. The first, spanning the period circa 1897-1905 was compiled by Higginson in 1939 for the State Library in Olympia.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
15/1	Scrapbook	circa 1897 -1905
15/2	Scrapbook	circa 1897-1908

Container(s)	Description	Dates
15/3	Scrapbook	circa 1899-1937
15/4	Scrapbook	circa 1900-1905
15/5	Scrapbook	circa 1908-1909
15/6	Scrapbook	circa 1908-1909

Series VI: Photographs , circa 1870-1920s

Photographs of Ella Higginson, family and friends, including one photograph album from which most of the prints have been removed.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
16/1-16/4	Photographic Prints	undated
16/5	Photo album	undated
16a/1	Glass plate negatives (14 items)	undated
16a/2	Glass Plate negative (1 item)	undated

Series VII: Ephemera, 1904, Undated, , 1904

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
16/6	Four Leaf Clover	undated
16/7	Drawing	undated
16/8	Notes re: Fairhaven Library construction	1904
16/9	Maps of Alaska	undated
Oversize Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1	Sheet Music to "The Song of The Wanderer"	undated

Box/Folder

16/10	Four Leaf Clover Sheet Music	undated
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Series VIII: Artifacts, Undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		

17	Print blocks	
	Ella Higginson	undated
	Buildings	undated
	Four leaf clover stamp	undated
	Four Leaf Clover poem	undated
	Four Leaf Clover words and music	undated
	Frontispiece	undated
	Higginson's signature stamp	undated
	American Red Cross Medal	undated

Box

18	Glass candle holder	undated
	Painted candle holder	undated
	Picture frame (no picture)	undated
	Pen	undated
	Bead necklace	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Letter opener	undated
	Three educational primers	undated

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Poets laureate --Washington (State)

Women authors, American --Washington (State)

Personal Names :

Higginson, Ella. -- Archives.

Other Creators :

Finding aid prepared by Ruth Steele
2003