

Abigail Scott Duniway papers, 1852-1992

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Duniway, Abigail Scott, 1834-1915
Title	Abigail Scott Duniway papers
Dates	1852-1992 (inclusive) 1852 1992
Quantity	9.25 linear feet, (28 containers)
Collection Number	Coll 232B
Summary	Abigail Scott Duniway (1834-1915) moved to Oregon from Illinois in 1852 with her family on the Oregon Trail and kept a detailed journal of their travels. Duniway was later a key leader of the Woman's Suffrage Movement in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, and she aided the national effort. This expansive collection contains her correspondence, published and unpublished literary works, documents pertaining to the suffrage movement, and a considerable amount of newspaper clippings reporting on Duniway's political and social work.
Repository	University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives. UO Libraries--SCUA 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 spcarref@uoregon.edu
Access Restrictions	Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections and University Archives Reading Room. Collection or parts of collection may be stored offsite. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives in advance of your visit to allow for transportation time.
Additional Reference Guides	See the Current Collection Guide for detailed description and requesting options.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

Abigail Jane Scott was born in Tazewell County, Illinois, on October 22, 1834. She was the third of twelve children of Ann Roelofson and John Tucker Scott. Abigail, whose family nickname was "Jenny," received only about 12 months of formal education. The Scotts crossed the plains to Oregon when Abigail was 17-years-old, and she kept the family journal of their journey. Her mother and youngest brother, Willie, died en route to Oregon. Abigail's journal served as the basis of her 1859 novel Captain Gray's Company, the first commercially printed novel in Oregon.

Duniway (then Scott) became a teacher in the small town of Cincinnati (now Eola), Oregon, while her family ran an inn in Lafayette. There, she met Benjamin Charles Duniway and married him August 2, 1853. The newlyweds moved to Ben's Clackamas County farm. After a few years, the Duniways moved to Yamhill County where Abigail started to write her first novel as well as anonymous letters to local newspapers. The Duniways lost their farm because Ben cosigned loans for a friend who defaulted following a catastrophic flood. The Duniways then moved to Lafayette, where Abigail taught school and ran a millinery shop while Ben created a washing machine and bred horses.

Duniway's thoughts and writings began to turn to suffrage in the 1860s. In 1871, she moved her family to Portland and, in May of that year, launched her weekly newspaper, *The New North West*. She also began to lecture throughout the Northwest along with nationally-renown suffragist Susan B. Anthony. Duniway sold her newspaper in 1886.

The Duniways had six children: Clara, Willis, Hubert, Wilkie, Clyde and Ralph. Clara died at a young age in 1886. Willis went on to be State Printer; Hubert became a lumber exporter; Wilkie was a printer for various Portland papers; Clyde became a professor and president of three universities, and Ralph was a prominent Portland attorney. Ben Duniway died in 1896.

Abigail Duniway was an indefatigable supporter of women's suffrage. She encountered personal setbacks such as poor health, money problems, and opposition from her brother Harvey Scott, who edited a local paper, *The Portland Oregonian*. She persisted despite political opposition in the form of local resistance, the consistent failure of women's suffrage referendums on state ballots, and divisions with Eastern suffrage organizations. This persistence paid off in 1912 when Oregon became the seventh state in the Union to pass a women's suffrage amendment. Governor Oswald West asked Duniway to write the proclamation for his signature. Duniway had the honor of being the first woman to register to vote in Multnomah County. During this period she also authored numerous novels. Abigail Jane Scott Duniway died on October 11, 1915.

Source: Moynihan, Ruth Barnes. *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway* (Yale University Press, 1983). Coll 232B, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon.

Content Description

Suffrage Correspondence, the first series, contains letters concerning Abigail Scott Duniway's work in the suffrage movement.

The second series is Family Correspondence, consisting of letters both to and from Abigail Scott Duniway. Most letters are from Abigail to her son Clyde; the topics range from politics and religion to local family news.

The third series is Non-Family Correspondence, containing letters concerning Abigail's books, portraits, and letter after her death.

The 1852 Journal series contains the original 1852 Overland Journal which Duniway kept as her family crossed the plains, as well as a photocopied 1853 revision and typed copy galley proofs. Business records of Covered Wagon Women are also included.

Manuscripts (Abigail Scott Duniway) contains nearly three boxes of Abigail's writings. They are further divided into Unpublished and Published. These include contain notes, speeches, poems, serialized novels, rough and final copies of novel manuscripts, stories, pamphlets, and a few copies of the *New*

NorthWest. (The novel Captain Gray's Company can be found in the Rare Books Collection. Other published books and novels by Duniway can be found in the Oregon Collection.)

The series Manuscripts By Others comprises published and unpublished speeches, pamphlets, and notes. Highlights include Clyde A. Duniway's "My Memories of Abigail Scott Duniway."

Business Papers include deeds, public records and trust account ledgers, as well as various miscellaneous records.

Biographical Information contains mostly newspaper articles about Duniway before and after her death. Also included are fictional radio scripts.

The Miscellany series contains a variety of items pertaining to Abigail Scott Duniway, including a steel engraving print, Suffrage Hymn sheet music, and a copy of Duniway's Path Breaking. Of note is Duniway's 2-volume set of scrapbooks that she compiled herself.

Scrapbooks include news clippings.

The Oversize series includes materials that intellectually belong within the other series, but are stored in larger boxes. Everyone should review this series in case there are materials pertinent to your research.

Administrative Information

Detailed Description of the Collection

Description

[Guide to the Abigail Scott Duniway papers](#)

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Suffragists--Oregon

Women--Suffrage--Oregon

Personal Names :

Catt, Carrie Chapman, 1859-1947

DeVoe, Emma Smith, 1848-1927

Duniway, C. A. (Clyde Augustus), 1866-1944

Geographical Names :

Oregon National Historic Trail

Form or Genre Terms :

Manuscripts for publication

Overland journals

Finding aid prepared by Amber Davis, Veta Schlimgen, and Amanda Faber
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