

James M. Greenwood Papers (SC86-1)

Introduction

James M. Greenwood was Superintendent of the Kansas City School District in the late 19th century and early 20th century. He was much admired by the community and known nationally and internationally as an accomplished educator.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: James M. Greenwood

Title: James M. Greenwood Papers

Dates: 1891-1941, bulk 1891-1914

Size: 0.81 linear feet, 2 boxes (2 book boxes are labeled as folders)

Collection Number: SC86-1

Donor Information

Unknown, presumed to have been donated after the death of Greenwood's daughter Ada McLaughlin in 1935.

Citation Note

James M. Greenwood Papers (SC86-1), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Administrative Information

Custodial History: There was also a book collection of over 2,000 titles donated to the library in 1958. This collection consists primarily of arithmetic books which were acquired by Mr. Greenwood over his life time. These have been included in the classed book holdings of the department.

Related Collections: James Mickelborough Greenwood Papers, 1874-1914, (G1), Pickler Memorial Library, Truman State University, Kirksville, Missouri, copy of finding aid in collection folder.

Biographical/Historical Sketch

James Mickleborough Greenwood was born in Sangamon County, Illinois, on November 15, 1837. He was the son of Edmund and Jeannette Foster Greenwood. He was raised on a farm and at an early age developed an interest in mathematics. The family moved to Adair County, Missouri and James taught his first school at the age of 16 in that county. He attended Methodist Seminary in Canton, Missouri and eventually married Amanda McDaniel in 1859, a teacher in Kirksville, Missouri. They had three children.

During the Civil War Greenwood enlisted in the Missouri militia, serving from 1861-1864. After the war until he came to Kansas City in 1874, he taught at various schools including the Kirksville Normal School. He was offered the job of superintendent of the Kansas City School District from among 16 candidates, serving in that position from 1874 until 1913. He became an advisor to the School Board and served as such until he died at his desk in the Kansas City Public Library/Board of Education building at 9th and Locust on August 1, 1914.

James Greenwood was superintendent of the Kansas City School District during a period of rapid growth for the city and as a consequence for the school district too. During his tenure in Kansas City, he was much admired and respected and the schools attained a national as well as international reputation. Professor Greenwood was widely considered a distinguished, progressive educator who was known for introducing many new, and for his day, modern ideas. He was interested in his teachers, the curriculum, and the students. He would probably have referred to himself as a mathematician and was interested in the subject all of his life. He wrote books and articles on the topic, lectured on it, and pursued and nurtured those talented in the field. He was also fond of playing checkers and chess.

Greenwood held many honors and extra professional positions. He was elected President of the Missouri State Teacher's Association in 1875-76 and again in 1906. He served as treasurer of the National Education Association for several years during the 1890s as well as President of the organization in 1898 and later as a lifetime member of its Board of Trustees. Greenwood traveled widely lecturing and he wrote numerous professional articles. He had published several educational books as well as mathematics books. Some of the more well known titles includes a revision of Ray's Higher Arithmetic, Principles of Education Practically Applied, and History of American Arithmetics. In 1897, the curators of the University of Missouri conferred a Doctor of Laws degree to him. He traveled in Europe with national education officials to observe the progress of education in some of the principal European countries. After his wife died, he married Josephine Heermans, at that time principal of Whittier School.

According to newspaper accounts of his funeral, the following quotations represent how he was perceived by friends and peers: (Kansas City Journal, Aug. 2, 1914)

"Professor Greenwood was the most noble, worthy and versatile superintendent in the United States...He was head and shoulders above anyone else" – Horace Williams

"He had a most remarkable memory. Nothing was every forgotten. His mind was so full that you never felt that his sources were being exhausted. He was a thrilling speaker and when he was in action he swayed his audience with his irresistible power." – Horace Williams

"Consider the local school system as a whole-it is his work" – Judge W. T. Bland

[Information for the biographical account was obtained from newspaper clippings found in the department's mounted newspaper clipping collection]

Scope and Content Note

This collection of papers can be divided into the following groups: correspondence primarily written to Greenwood (Folders 1-4); a small amount of correspondence written by Greenwood as well as other personal and miscellaneous items (Folder 5); reports and speeches (Folders 6-9); an

unpublished manuscript on the history of Missouri (Folders 9-17); and journals. The dates of the items range primarily from the 1890s up to Greenwood's death that covers more of the middle to late period of his school superintendence.

Within the collection are some published items, but the bulk of the collection is handwritten and typewritten items. The correspondence includes personal congratulatory letters. Of special interest in this category is responses received by Greenwood concerning a request he sent to the schools asking them how he and other school officials could be helpful to teachers in visiting them. These included 43 elementary school responses. There is some correspondence from Josephine Heermans as well as items of interest dated after his death.

Miscellaneous items include Greenwood Club yearbooks, published catalogs, receipts, newspaper clippings, outlines, papers and other correspondence, etc. The papers are typewritten and deal with educational related subjects. Correspondence written by Greenwood found in this category was written in 1908-1909.

The reports and speeches include primarily education related subjects as well as mathematics and reports to the Board of Education. Included is a short two-page handwritten sketch of the Kansas City schools apparently written after Greenwood's death. Of local interest is Colonel Van Horn's address on acceptance nomination for Congress, Sept. 10, 1902. Many of the speeches/reports are in outline form and some are identified as being written by others than Greenwood.

A large part of this collection is a manuscript on the history of Missouri entitled "The History of Missouri." Newspaper clippings following Greenwood's death mention this manuscript and that it had been sent to the printer. However, it is doubtful that it was ever published. It contains forty-one chapters both handwritten and typewritten with some editing included. This manuscript contains histories typical of the day including the state's early history, river history, history on the banks, churches, education, noted Missourians, etc.

The last part of the collection contains two journals and one notepad/journal. The two journals are dated 1910 and 1914 and appear to have been written by James Greenwood. They follow the school year, September to May with no entries during the summer months. Visits to various schools are noted including remarks on teachers. The notepad journal does not seem to have been Greenwood's, but it appears to have been kept by Josephine Heermans Greenwood, the second wife of Greenwood.

Because all three components of this collection series are so inter-related, it is important to look at each separately and as a whole to gain an understanding of those involved. The James M. Greenwood Papers present a brief glimpse into the busy and dedicated life of a local early educator. The newspaper clipping files, that are a part of Special Collections, are beneficial to consult when studying this man as they contain numerous entries for him. The department also has twenty items classed in the collection that he wrote including his math related publications. There are numerous entries in the Local History Database and some of these entries include citations to articles published by him in national magazines. The Kansas City School Board minutes (SC 23) are also available on microfilm and cover the years when Greenwood was superintendent. Portraits of him may also be found in the department's photograph collection.

Arranged by record type. Part of the Greenwood Collection Series which includes SC86-1, SC86-2, SC86-3.

Collection Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1 – Letters to James M. Greenwood

- Beginning: June 15, 1891, Ending: September 16, 1897. Handwritten and typewritten
- Contents: Primarily congratulations on being elected President of the National Education Association.

Folder 2 – Letters to James M. Greenwood

- Beginning: August 13, 1899, Ending: Dec. 19, 1901. Handwritten and typewritten
- Contents: Letters from Josephine Heermans, Ida M. Reese, J. W. Baldwin, and others from the various schools in the district who were responding to Mr. Greenwood's request "Will you please write me candidly how the Superintendent and his Assistants can be most helpful to your teachers in visiting your schools?" These include responses from these schools: Thacher, Switzer, Attucks, Summner, Kensington, Bryant, Chace, Martin, Karnes, Yeager, Lincoln, Linwood, Longfellow, Lowell, Ivanhoe, Jackson, Adams, Ashland, Allen, Benton, Franklin, Douglass, Bruce, Clay, Garrison, Greenwood, Hamilton, Hedrick, Humboldt, Hyde Park, Irving, Madison, Morse, Page, Penn, Phillips, Scarritt, Webster, Lathrop, Washington, Whittier.

Folder 3 – Letters to James M. Greenwood

- Beginning: January 4, 1902, Ending: February 24, 1917. Handwritten and typewritten
- Contents: Continuation of school responses to Mr. Greenwood's request concerning visiting the schools. Schools include: Jefferson and Garfield. Also contains a letter from Josephine Heermans as well as correspondence concerning professional duties, military organization information, family business, and personal. The last letter is from Purd Wright and discusses the placement in the library of the marble chair in Greenwood's honor.

Folder 4 – Letters to James M. Greenwood

- Contain no date Letters handwritten and 1 telegram from Massachusetts
- Contents: Personal letters mostly from Josephine Heermans with one from A. Butcher and one from Eugene Crosby.

Folder 5 – Miscellaneous Materials and Letters written by James M. Greenwood

- Empty envelopes with notes and notes on piece of paper
- Postcards to Greenwood from Office of Recorder of Deeds (3c.)
- Program from Cambridge City Teachers' Institute (1908)
- Program from Ross County Teachers' Institute, n.d.
- Catalogue of Works on the Game of Checkers or Draughts
- Greenwood Club yearbooks – 1895-96, 1896-97, 1898-99, 1899-1900

- Newspaper clipping – “The New President of the N.E.A.,” July 14, 1897, [San Francisco newspaper], photocopied
- Typed mimeographed outline – “School Supervision”
- Receipts
- Outline – “Suggestions How to Study a Text-book Lesson,” typewritten, mimeographed, 3 p.
- Paper – “Suggestions for Improvement of the Study Period. March 1908,” typewritten, mimeographed, 2 p.
- Paper – “Suggestions for the Improvement of this Study Period, April 1908,” typewritten, mimeographed, 2p.
- “The Pioneer,” Bulletin of the Kansas City Museum, V.2, #3, September-October, 1941
- Booklet entitled “Supt. J.M. Greenwood,” concerning teachers salaries
- Letter from I.C. McNeill, typewritten, January 28, 1928 with handwritten letter on reverse, signature unknown.
- Article of agreement on land lots signed by James M. Greenwood and Ada Greenwood MacLaughlin, April 20, 1909.
- Letter written by James M. Greenwood addressed to Mr. McNeill, handwritten, July 20, 1908, 4 p.
- Letter written by J. M. Greenwood to Principal C. T. Millis,
- London, England, typewritten, February 1st, 1909, 1p.

Folder 6 – Reports and Speeches, 1906-1913

- “Brief Notes on Davidson’s History of Education,” typewritten, 10 p.
- “Remarks by Supt. J. M. Greenwood,” typewritten, 1 p.
- “How Superintendents and Principals Can Help Teachers,” typewritten, 2 p.
- “K.C. Schools Sketch,” handwritten, n.d. [ca1915], author unknown
- “Logical Bases of Education-Welton,” typewritten, 1 p. (21 copies), J. M. Greenwood, Kansas City, Mo., Nov. 19, 1904
- “Address of Mr. J. Crawford James,” typewritten, 3 p., given at Greenwood evening, which honored Prof. Greenwood, ca1900.
- “To the Board of Education...” – Typewritten, 2 p., Dec. 20, 1906, concerning the need for trade schools. Superintendent of City Schools stationary. Also a questionnaire form letter, March 9, 1907.
- “To the Board of Education...” – Typewritten, 4 p. (3 c.), November 12, 1908. Concerns kindergarten regulations.

Folder 7 – Reports and Speeches, 1906-1913

- Pamphlet – “Annual Address of J. M. Greenwood to the Teachers of Kansas City, Missouri,” September 5, 1910.
- Form letter from Sidney J. Madge, Columbia University, December 8, 1906, typewritten, 3 p., with questions
- “A Remarkably Suggestive Book,” typewritten, 6 p.
- “Thomas H. Benton, the Leader in Western Progress,” typewritten, 3 p.
- “Speech of General H. W. Riley, Wright County in the House of Representatives of Missouri, February 8, 1861, copied from the Weekly Western Journal of Commerce of February 28, 1861,” typewritten, 4 p., 2 c.

- “Colonel Van Horn’s Address on Acceptance Nomination for Congress, Sept. 10, 1902,” typewritten, 2 p.
- “The Psychology of Peoples,” typewritten, 2 p., outline
- “An Efficient Superintendent,” typewritten, 3 p., outline

Folder 8 – Reports and Speeches, 1906-1913

- Untitled paper, handwritten, 4 p., dealing with arithmetic
- “Teacher’s Manual in Arithmetic for the Elementary Schools of Kansas City, Mo.” Prepared by J. H. Markley, Chairman, C. S. Parker, Josephine Heermans, Elizabeth Buchanan, Ida Barley, H. E. Robinson, committee, n.d. Typewritten, 16 p., heavily edited.
- Untitled, typewritten, 2 p., re: mathematics related
- “To the Board of Education...” typewritten, 6 p., signed by J. M. Greenwood, 1909. Condition of the schools report.
- “Number Teaching” by W.H. Martin, typewritten, 1 p., n.d.
- “Some Remarks From High Authorities on Numbers,” typewritten and a handwritten copy, Greenwood’s name attached, 2 p. and 4 p., n.d.
- “Foundations of a System of Number Teaching,” typewritten and edited, 2 p., Josephine Heermans name attached, n.d.
- “Summary of Discussion of January 14, 1909,” typewritten, 3 p., January 19, 1909, names associated include, H. E. Robinson, Ida L. Barley, J. H. Markley.
- “National Ideals,” typewritten, 1 p., n.d., outline, edited.
- “Abstract of Outline as a Basis of Number Work,” J. M. Greenwood, typewritten, 1 p., n.d., 3 c.
- “Some Fundamental Principles in the Theory and Practice of Teaching Arithmetic,” typewritten, 2 p., n.d., 2 c.
- “On Teaching Arithmetic,” typewritten, 1 p., n.d.
- Committee on Course of Study in Arithmetic report, typewritten, 1 p., Signed by Elizabeth Buchanan and S. E. Kelsey, February 9, 1909.
- “Report of the Committee on Elimination” typewritten and handwritten, 1 p., n.d., signed by Chas. S. Parker, Chairman and S. E. Richards, Secretary.
- General Committee on Arithmetic, typewritten, 1 p., n.d.
- “Advantages of Rational Number Teaching,” typewritten, 1 p., n.d., 2c.
- “Agriculture as Taught in the Kansas City Ward and High Schools,” typewritten, 3 p., February 25, 1913, signed by Ernest de Vigne, Supervisor of Horticulture, Kansas City Public Schools.
- “Persuasion,” handwritten, 1 p., n.d.
- “Extracts From Some Noted Men: On the Value of the Study of English Grammar,” selected by J. M. Greenwood, typewritten, 3 p., n.d.
- “Cooking, Syllabus of Course of Study, Grade Sixth,” typewritten, 2 p., n.d.
- “Suggested Plan of Work for the Committees on Arithmetic,” typewritten, 1 p., submitted by J. M. Greenwood, December 26, 1908.
- “To Keep a Corps of Teachers from Dying Alive,” typewritten, 4 p., signed by J. M. Greenwood, Sept. 24, 1911.
- “To the Board of Education:...” typewritten, 2 p., submitted by J. M. Greenwood, January 28, 1911. Report on his travels east
- “Seeing Kansas City With a Microscope,” typewritten, 2 p., n.d.
- “The Teacher and Pupil,” attached to cardboard, typewritten, 1 p., n.d.

Folder 9 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Contents page
- Preface
- Chapter I – Position and Extent, p. 1-3
- Chapter II – Early Discoveries, Explorations and Settlements. Vague Ideas p. 4-17
- Chapter III – French Settlements, p.18-35

Folder 10 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter IV – Early Settlements in Missouri, p. 36-44
- Chapter V – Official Transfer of Louisiana to the United States, p. 45-53
- Chapter VI – The Official Change to Missouri, p. 54-61
- Chapter VII – The Indians in Missouri, p. 62-73
- Chapter VIII – Some Experiences of the Early Settlers, p. 74-84
- Chapter IX – Bread-The Staff of Life, p. 85-88
- Chapter X – Hunting for Salt, p. 89-93
- Chapter XI – Roads and Road Laws, p. 94-99
- Chapter XII – Boating on the Western Rivers, p. 100-106

Folder 11 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XIII – Land Grants and Complications, p. 107-110
- Chapter XIV – The Platte Purchase, p. 111-117
- Chapter XV – Doniphan’s Expedition, p. 118-137 (handwritten)
- Chapter XVI – Building Railroads in Missouri, p. 138-148

Folder 12 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XVII – Banks and Banking in Missouri, p. 149-161 (handwritten)
- Chapter XVIII – The Church History of Missouri, p. 162-168
- Chapter XIX – The Baptist in Missouri, p. 169-183
- Chapter XX – Methodism, p.184-198

Folder 13 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XXI – Presbyterianism in Missouri, p. 199-206
- Chapter XXII – The Christian Church, p. 207-215
- Chapter XXIII – Episcopal Church, p. 216-218
- Chapter XXIV – The Congregationalists in Missouri, p. 219-221
- Chapter XXV – Other Church Organizations, p.222-227

Folder 14 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XXVI – Latter-Day Saints, p. 228-247
- Chapter XXVII – Religious Debates and Their Influence on the People, p. 248-258
- Chapter XXVIII – The State Convention of 1861, p.259-286 (Handwritten)

Folder 15 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XXIX – Early Education in Missouri, p. 287-293
- Chapter XXX – Private Schools Under the Territory, p. 294-300
- Chapter XXXI – Missouri as a State, 301-307
- Chapter XXXII – The Beginning of the Graded Schools in St. Louis, p. 308-312
- Chapter XXXIII – Public School Legislation From 1804 to 1861, p. 313-320
- Chapter XXXIV – The Public Schools Under Way, p. 321-327

Box 2

Folder 16 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XXXV – The State Normal Schools of Missouri, p. 328-336
- Chapter XXXVI – The Origin of the College Union, p. 337-356
- Chapter XXXVII – The Country Doctor as a Factor, p. 357-365
- Chapter XXXVIII – Building Railroad Bridges, p.366-379 (Handwritten)

Folder 17 – Unpublished Manuscript, “The History of Missouri”, typewritten/edited

- Chapter XXXIX – Slavery in Missouri, p.380-393
- Chapter XL – Amusements and Games, p. 394-404
- Chapter XLI – Some Noted Missourians That Our Children Should Know, p. 405-445 (Handwritten). Includes: Thomas Hart Benton, George Clinton Swallow, George Caleb Bingham, Mark Twain, Kit Carson, James Bridger, William Harris, etc.

Folder 18 - Notepad and photocopied clippings, 1892-1896

- Notepad and photocopied clippings, 1892-1896. Primarily diary entries, apparently not James Greenwood’s notepad but possibly that of Josephine Heermans. Newspaper clippings appear to be from local newspapers although they are not cited and they deal with social and educational topics.

Folder 19 - Journal, 1910 (book box)

- Journal, 1910, pages dated, appears to belong to James Greenwood. First half of year contains daily diary notations, no entries during the Summer, resumes daily entries in September through December.

Folder 20 - Journal, 1914 (book box)

- Journal, 1914, no dated pages, appears to belong to James Greenwood. Entries from January to April 22, 1914. Primarily records of visits to the following high schools: Central, Lincoln, Manual, Northeast, and Westport and miscellaneous category. Includes notations concerning teachers, what was being taught, etc.

Processed by Special Collections Librarian, Sara J. Nyman, December 2001.

Updated by Special Collections Librarian Kate Hill, July 2013.