

Thomas J. Fitzpatrick Papers

The collection includes a scrapbook, newspaper clippings, correspondence and diaries of Fitzpatrick, a professor of botany and mathematics and an avid book collector.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Thomas J. Fitzpatrick
Title: Thomas J. Fitzpatrick papers
Dates: circa 1891- 1933
Size: 3/4 linear ft., 2 boxes
Location: SC93

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Additional physical form available: Small portion of collection has been digitized.

Acquisition information: Book purchase, 1953.

Custodial history: Not maintained as a separate collection are approximately 20,000 books and pamphlets purchased in 1953 that once belonged to Fitzpatrick. Highlights of this purchase include 1,500 volumes of poetry, a series of shorthand texts dating back to 1758, works on regional and Western history (especially Lewis and Clark and other explorers), Mormonism, Abraham Lincoln, and nineteenth century county histories (Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri) and atlases. In the 1980s the Library sold some of the more rare books. It is assumed this collection of personal papers came with the book purchase in 1953.

Citation note: Thomas J. Fitzpatrick papers (SC93), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

Thomas Jefferson Fitzpatrick was born April 2, 1868 at Centerville, Iowa. Some published accounts state that he was a direct descendant of Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, but this has not been verified. He attended the State University of Iowa and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1893, and later in 1900 with a Master of Science. He became the first person hired to teach at Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa, in 1895. As one of the three-person faculty, he was designated "senior professor," thus serving as the first "president" of the college. He also served as the college's librarian. He left Graceland in November 1898.

From 1903 to 1907, Fitzpatrick worked as a field collector for the Iowa State Historical Society. He returned to the Graceland faculty and library from 1908 to 1912, and then moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he joined the faculty at Cotner College. In 1914, Fitzpatrick is listed as a "fellow in botany" at the University of Nebraska where he continued until he retired in 1949. He became Assistant Professor of Botany and Curator of the Herbarium at the University of Nebraska in 1918, a position he held until his retirement. He also served as

librarian for the Botany and Mathematics departments. For several summers in the 1920s he worked for the Carnegie Institution in Colorado at the "Alpine Station."

Fitzpatrick wrote many articles, and his work *Rafinesque: a Sketch of His Life, with Bibliography*, published in 1911, was a major contribution in the field of botany.

In addition to being a professor and librarian, Fitzpatrick was a bibliomaniac, and at the time of his death in 1952 owned more than 100 tons of books. In 1953 the Kansas City Public Library purchased a portion of Fitzpatrick's mammoth collection, approximately 20,000 items. The scientific works, about 8,000 volumes, were purchased by the University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Library.

Scope and content note

The T. J. Fitzpatrick collection contains a scrapbook of mostly newspaper clippings encompassing the years 1895-1900, along with correspondence, memorabilia, and numerous clippings placed between the pages; eight diaries; nine lithographs; and a geological survey of the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean (1853-1854).

Collection Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1 — Scrapbook

Includes mostly newspaper clippings, memorabilia like receipts, programs, announcements, and correspondence. Items were not placed in chronological order. The scrapbook has been photocopied and all clippings discarded. Other memorabilia was removed and saved.

Contents - Not inclusive

- **Clippings and memorabilia about Graceland College**, its beginnings and first graduation in 1898, including:

Laying of the cornerstone on November 12, 1895;

Excerpts from speeches made at the cornerstone ceremony, including those by Joseph Smith, III, president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, under whose direction the college began;

List of items placed in the cornerstone included: copies of the Chicago papers: *Chronicle*, *Time-Herald*, *Inter-Ocean*, and *Tribune*; The Lamoni papers, consisting of the *Saints' Herald*, *Autumn Leaves*, *Independent Patriot*, *College City Chronicle*, and *Zion's Ensign*; Inspired Translation of the Holy Scriptures, The Book of Mormon, and Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and articles of incorporation.

Oration delivered at the graduating exercises, June 15 (*College City Chronicle*, June 23, 1898)

Full text of the following graduation addresses: Baccalaureate sermon given by President Joseph Smith; address of graduate Fred M. Smith, "Mission of

Graceland College;" address by Mrs. M. F. L. Fitzpatrick, Professor of French and German, "The College Graduate;" and address of Professor J. T. Pence, acting president, professor of Latin and Greek, "Individualism Versus Socialism."

- **Obituary articles:**

Blair, W. W., (*Patriot*, April 23, 1896) (scrapbook page 31)

Cox, Thomas J., (died April 25, 1897) (scrapbook page 51)

Crum, John V., "speediest sprinter of the west" (May 3, 1897) (scrapbook page 37 and 46)

Smith, Bertha Madison, wife of Joseph Smith (died October 19, 1896) (scrapbook page 36)

Parvin, Theodore Sutton, Grand secretary of the Iowa Masonic grand lodge and librarian of the Iowa Masonic library. He founded and built the first Iowa Masonic library and was professor of natural science and librarian at the University of Iowa (article on July 5, 1901) (scrapbook page 82)

Schaeffer, Dr. Charles A., president of the State University of Iowa (*Iowa Citizen*, September 30, 1898) (scrapbook pages 64-65)

Tomlin, George, janitor, State University of Iowa (*Iowa Citizen*, July 21, 1899) (scrapbook page 66)

- **Newspaper marriage announcements:**

T. J. Fitzpatrick and Mary Linder (scrapbook page 33)

Fred M. Smith and Ruth L. Cobb (scrapbook page 46) (Includes printed "announcement of the marriage")

Bertha E. Linder to Henry F. Pumphrey (from *Fairfield Ledger*, June 20, 1900) (scrapbook page 50) (Fitzpatrick's sister-in-law)

- **Other clippings** mostly concerned with **botanical or geological** subject matter, as well as articles written by Fitzpatrick himself, and numerous **poems**.
- Clipping about **fire** that destroyed most of the library at the **State University of Iowa**, June 20, 1897 (scrapbook page 47).

Folder 2

Correspondence and memorabilia removed from the scrapbook like invitations, programs (some from Iowa City High school), receipts, and title page of "Manual of Flowering Plants of Iowa" by Fitzpatrick, 1899. Includes a letter (1895) to Graceland faculty designating Fitzpatrick "senior professor" of the three-person faculty, with original signature of Joseph Smith, III.

Folder 3

Copies of newspaper articles and poems found in an envelope in the scrapbook. Highlights include the following.

- "An Iowa Man in New York Zoo: What Hornaday Has Done for Preserving Animals." Hornaday is the person primarily responsible for promoting the display of taxidermied animals in museums in natural habitats. *Iowa Republican*, October 18, 1907 (page 5).
- "Missouri Houn' Dawg Song." Article about the original "houn' dawg" song, "Quit Kickin' My Dawg Around," written by David E. Allyn in 1889 at Grinnell, Iowa, to be sung in the Missouri Ozarks. Used by Champ Clark of Missouri in his run for presidency (page 8).
- Short clipping about rare manuscripts sold in Paris at auction: Alexandre Dumas' "Tour de Nesle" (\$49); Balzac's "Vautrin" (\$25.80); and Victor Hugo's "Notre Dame de Paris" with dedication to Mlle, George (\$120), February 8, 1903 (page 10).
- Clipping from an unnamed and undated newspaper, "Gen. Benton's Letter of Acceptance," signed Thomas H. Benton, Jr. written at Tipton, Iowa, August 28, 1865, to "Capt. Geo. W. Clark, Capt. A. T. Ault, and Rev. A. J. Barton." Benton accepts nomination as a candidate for the office of Governor for Iowa. Letter discusses the Civil War, slavery, and the question of suffrage for freed slaves (pages 13 and 14).
- "Runic Tablet Found Near Kensington, Minn." Brief article of discovery of the Kensington Stone in 1898 including an illustration of the inscription (page 21).

Folder 4

Lithographs (nine, 8" x 11"): Various scenes from the 35th parallel by the U.S. P.R.R. Exp. & Surveys

Folder 5

U.S. Pacific Rail Road Exploration & Survey, War Department, Geological Section from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Along and near the route explored by Lieut. A. W. Whipple Corps of Top. Eng. Near the Parallel of 35° North Latitude, 1853-1854.

Envelope 1

Memorabilia from or inserted into scrapbook, including souvenir program Graceland College dedication in 1897; railroad editorial pass; receipts; calling cards; Fred M. Smith and Ruth L. Cobb marriage announcement.

Box 2

Diaries

1902

Occasional entries in daily pages, all in shorthand; "cash account" entries from January to December.

1903

Only "cash account" entries from January to December; daily pages, empty.

1916

Only a few entries.

1917 (address as Bethany, Nebr., University of Nebraska)

January 5: received telegram about death of Fitzpatrick's father the night before.

February 17: moves into Herbarium in the new Bessey Hall; the Botanical Library moved later in June to Bessey Hall. March 28: receives "father's discharge and some pictures of his comrades of the Civil War;" mentions meetings about the war. April 4: "Received a letter from I [Ivan] P. Fitzpatrick [his first cousin] that his father T. J., after whom I was named, had died on January 17, 1917, thus outliving my father 13 days." Makes an entry that he buys a 1918 diary, but this collection does not include it.

1920

Most every day there is an entry. Fitzpatrick spends the summer in the Colorado Springs area working for the Carnegie Institution in an Alpine Laboratory, the "station," and collects plants from the area. He sells his house, but continues to live there until March of the following year. No entries in the expense/cash account pages.

1929

First six months occasional entry; summer months almost daily; latter part of year occasional entries. Mentions trips to prairies gathering flora.

1930

Some months no entries. August 20: "Took my last spare copy of Sketch of Rafinesque in sheets to bindery to be bound, so as to fill an order." August 26: "Our wedding anniversary." September 24: last entry.

1933 (flyleaf has address as: T. J. Fitzpatrick, 2002 North 68th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska)

Entries for almost every day. This diary includes more personal comments or "feelings," than the others that simply record "facts." The year begins with Mary (his wife) staying with her parents in Iowa City and daughter Lillian not well. March 31: "More or less depressed by the weather and by family and financial prospects. Will try to remedy as rapidly as I can." April 2: "Today is my 65th birthday. Took no particular notice of it." In July he received a copy of Mead's "Eight Iowa Cavalry in the Civil War," ("my father's regiment.").

Folder 1

Memorabilia removed from 1920 diary. Includes a photograph of Fitzpatrick and Dr. Weaver, the only photo found in the collection.

Folder 2

Memorabilia removed from 1930 diary.

Additional Resources

Fitzpatrick, T. J. *Rafinesque: A Sketch of His Life With Bibliography*. Des Moines: The Historical Department of Iowa, 1911. [MVSC 92 R137f]

_____. *Manual of the Flowering Plants of Iowa*. Lamoni, IA: privately published, 1899. [MVSC 583.09777 F55m]

Glenn, Ardis. *The Glenn Bookshop 1933-1980*. Kansas City, MO: University of Missouri-Kansas City, Friends of the Library, 1980. [MVSC 977.8411 G55g] See page 21.

Kansas City Public Library Office Files, SC 6, Series II, Box 9, Folder 22, Fitzpatrick, Thomas J.

Vosper, Robert. *A Pair of Bibliomanes for Kansas: Ralph Ellis and Thomas Jefferson Fitzpatrick*. [New York]: The Bibliographical Society of America, 1961. [MVSC 002 V97P]

Processed by Special Collections Librarian, Sherrie Kline Smith, 2004.