

Inventory of the

Shimer College
Mt. Carroll, Illinois

Collection

In the

Regional History Center

RC 77

INTRODUCTION

Duncan E. McBride and the Trustees Committee of Shimer College donated the Shimer College Collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on October 10, 1979. An addendum was added in January 2005.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 22
Number of containers: 32 + 2 volumes
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 77

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Shimer College Collection documents the founding and development of an important higher educational institution in Mt. Carroll, Illinois. Materials in this collection range from original manuscripts pre-dating Shimer's origin in 1853 to publications printed in 1978. There are six major record series in the Shimer College Collection: (1) original documents, historical, and biographical files; (2) files from the Office of the President; (3) alumnae and public relations records; (4) scrapbooks and photographs; (5) financial records; (6) Shimer College publications.

Types of materials making up the first three series include diaries, correspondence, legal documents, minutes, reports, and research relating to the founding and history of the College. Although these records span the period, 1838-1975, the bulk of the material documents the earliest years of the College (1853-1875) and the period 1930-1955. Unfortunately many of the records generated during the half century between 1875 and 1925 appear to have been lost.

The photo and scrapbook series is especially strong in the period 1925-1955 and documents campus personnel, groups, buildings, and events quite well. Publications and financial records found in the concluding series also fall mostly into the twentieth century, although some very early financial records have been preserved.

A major strength of this collection is its abundance of nineteenth-century correspondence and documents which are rather comprehensive. Researchers should note that subsequent alumnae correspondence and publications frequently contain additional information on Shimer's early history and founders. While there is considerable material on the twentieth century as well, there is progressively less after 1950 or 1955. In particular, business records, for all practical purposes, cease in 1924. Overall, coverage of recent years is the weakest part of the collection.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Frances Shimer College, now located in Waukegan, Illinois, traces its origins back to 1852 when Mount Carroll, Illinois residents, lacking public schools, sought to provide education for its citizenry. John Wilson and William T. Miller successfully led the attempt to get the State Legislature to incorporate the Mt. Carroll Seminary, which officially opened on May 11, 1853 in the town's Presbyterian Church. Two women, Frances Ann Wood and Cinderella Gregory, were invited to come from New York to operate the school. After shares were sold and a site chosen, a new building opened in October 1854. The Board then offered to sell the property to Wood and Gregory, who became full proprietors.

From 1854-1896 the Mt. Carroll Seminary continued under the direction of Frances Wood, who married Henry Shimer in 1857. From its inception it was a coeducational institution which offered the same six year program to student of both sexes. Intellectual, cultural, character, and spiritual development were stressed. In 1866 shortage of space led the Seminary to refuse to accept male residents. While there were male day students afterwards, the school became noted as a woman's school. In the mid and late nineteenth century few woman received formal education and few institutions granted women the right to a higher education. A rarity, especially West of the Appalachians, Mt. Carroll Seminary was therefore historically significant.

In 1896 the school was transferred to the University of Chicago and renamed the Frances Shimer Academy of the University of Chicago. Its Baptist Church connections and its orientation toward liberal arts were accordingly strengthened. One year later Shimer reestablished its autonomy but continued a cooperative working relationship with Chicago.

Throughout the twentieth century Shimer has enjoyed a reputation for innovation and for its emphasis on liberal arts. In 1920 it received accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and from the 1930's it offered an expanded junior college program for grades 11-14. A distinctive feature of the Shimer Plan, instituted in 1939, was its advocacy and use of primary sources in general education curriculum. Renewed affiliation with the University of Chicago in 1950 brought a return to co-educational status and led to the awarding of the first B.A. degree in 1952. Shimer's curriculum was now directly modeled on that of the University of Chicago. Formal affiliation between the two institutions however, ended in 1956.

Shimer celebrated its centennial from May 1952 to May 1953. In 1959 it became accredited as a four year college. For a brief period, 1959-1973, it was affiliated with the Episcopal Church.

Like many private liberal arts colleges, Shimer was beset with financial difficulties in the 1970's. Various attempts were made to keep the school running. Bankruptcy proceedings eventually ended in a court agreement by which the Trustees agreed to sell the 36 acres Mt.

Carroll site to pay off a \$2,000,000 debt. In October 1979 a Restoration College Association bought the main facility at the bankruptcy auction. During the preceding in January Shimer College moved to smaller quarters in Waukegan, Illinois. In September 2006 the college moved to the Chicago campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Church Colleges

Colleges

Diaries, 1840-1869

Education

Frances W. Shimer College

Mount Carroll

Seminaries

Shimer, Frances Wood

Shimer College

Women

COLLECTION INVENTORY

Series I. Original Documents, Historical, and Biographical Files

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1-6	Histories and Biographies, 1853-1954
2	1-2	<u>Girls, Cattle and Cowboys</u> , 1941
3	1	Stockholders, Questions & Answers, 1853-1962
	2-4	F.A. Wood School Books, 1838-1849
	5	F.W. Shimer Correspondence, 1853-1897
	6	Frances Shimer Estate, 1911-1924
	7	Broadsides, Programs, Postcards, 1852-1899
	8	Correspondence, 1858-1893
4	1	Reunion Society, Minutes, 1859-1915
	2	Literary Diary, 1855
	3-4	Autograph Albums, 1856
	5	Lyceum Minutes, Roster, 1855-1856
	6	Mt. Carroll Missionary Society, 1868-1872
	7	Clippings, 1871-1880
	8	Autograph Album, 1885
	9	Friends of M.C.S., 1888
	10	N.W. Baptist Women College Society, 1889-1900
Oversize Drawer 17, Folder 7		Documents, Ads, 1853-1931 (8)
5	2 volumes	Rinewalt Correspondence, 1849-1882
	1	Rinewalt Correspondence, 1843-1896
6	1	Correspondence, 1900-1903, 1928
	2	By-laws, Articles of Incorporation, 1896, 1942
	3-4	Transfer to University of Chicago, Correspondence, 1896-1904
	5-6	University of Chicago Relationship, Correspondence, 1947-1966
	7	Benefactors, 1920's
	8	Officers, Trustees, 1897-1946, 1968
	9-12	Board of Trustees, Minutes, 1927-1944, Creditor's Committee, 1978-1980

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
6	13	Advisory Committee, 1945
Series II. Office of the President Files		
	14-19	Presidency, Candidates, 1930-1939
	20-28	President's Office, Correspondence, 1924-1934
7	1-14	President's Office, Correspondence, 1935-1944
	15	<u>Report of a Survey of Frances Shimer College, 1944</u>
	16	<u>Advancing Education -- From School to College, 1953</u>
	17	<u>Shimer College; A Report on the State of the College, 1958</u>
	18	<u>Shimer's Case for Becoming an Episcopal College, 1959</u>
	19	Association of Episcopal Colleges, 1965-1966
	20-21	Foundation for Episcopal Colleges, 1962-1969
	22	Administrative Organization, Procedures, 1953, 1961
	23	Illinois Commission, Non Public Higher Education, 1968
	24	General Information, 1975
	25	Faculty Information, 1946-1947
	26-27	Faculty, Minutes, 1905-1930
8	1-8	Faculty, Minutes, 1936-1975
	9	Faculty Constitution Committee, 1965-1973
	10	Education Policies Committee, 1963-1974
	11	Committee of Faculty Function and Structure, 1965-1966
	12-13	Faculty, Roster, Conditions of Service, 1960-1970
	14-15	Faculty, Curriculum, 1960-1977
	16-18	Library, Financial Records, 1935-1953
	19-22	Library, Reports, 1923-1959
	23-28	Library, New Book Lists, 1943-1973
	29	Library, Articles, 1960-1969
9	1	Library, Bills, 1973-1976
	2	Library, Interlibrary Loan, 1972-1975
	3-4	Library, Title II A, Infopass, 1973-1976
	5-7	Student Registers, 1853-1896
	8	Student Rosters, 1885-1889
	9	Student Address Lists, 1963-1968
10	1	Student Address Lists, 1968-1972
	2	Student Handbooks, Constitution, 1959-1967
	3-5	Student Placement, Comprehensive Exams, 1951-1967

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	6
Series III. Alumnae and Public Relations Records			
10	6-7	International Relations Club, Minutes, Correspondence, 1935-1952	
	8	Art Club, 1937-1945	
	9-19	Programs, 1862-1975, n.d.	
	20	Alumnae Association, Minutes, 1881-1889	
	21-23	Alumnae Correspondence and Programs, 1942-1950	
	24-27	<u>Alumnae News</u> , 1933-1968	
	28	Alumnae Dinners, 1946	
	29	Alumnae Associations, by place, 1940-1951	
11	1-16	Alumnae Associations, by place, 1946-1951	
	17-19	Correspondence, 1930-1951	
	20-23	Public Relations, Publications, Correspondence, 1940-1950	
	24-25	Advertising, Rates, Ads, 1946-1948	
	26-27	Publicity, Releases, Clippings, 1946-1970	
	28	Recruitment Representatives, 1949	
	29-30	Veterans, Job Information, 1946-1947	
	31	Photography, Movies, 1946-1947	
	32-34	Post Office, Printing, Correspondence, Rates, 1932-1951	
	35-36	Scholarship, Endowment Programs, 1949	
	37-42	Public Relations Programs, 1947-1949	
	43	Baptist Correspondence, Publications, 1948-1950	
Series IV. Scrapbooks and Photographs			
12	1-6	Scrapbooks, Clippings, 1926-1937	
13	1-7	Scrapbooks, Clippings, 1938-1941	
14	1-4	Scrapbooks, 1941-1956	
15	4 volumes	Religion and Social Service League, Scrapbooks, 1951-1955	
Oversize	1 volume	Scrapbook, 1931-1937	
Oversize	1 volume	"Air Tour to Mexico" Scrapbook, 1941	
16	v. 1	Shimer faculty portraits, 1879-1896 (13)	
	v. 2	Frances W. Shimer portrait, n.d. (1)	
	v. 3-8	Campus Scenes, 1895-1905 (53)	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
17	v. 1	Mrs. E.A. Demmon, tin type, n.d. (1)
	v. 2	Identified group portraits, 1895-1917 (8)
	v. 3-7	Campus Scenes, 1890's (43)
	v. 8-12	Biographical portraits, 1890's (22)
	v. 13	Student activities, 1913-1928 (13)
	v. 14-17	May Fete, 1916-1947 (28)
	v. 18	Club and group photos, 1937-1939 (14)
	v. 19	Students, 1924-1931 (6)
	v. 20	Class photos, 1929, 1930, 1938 (5)
	v. 21	Students, 1932-1938 (16)
	v. 22-27	Student and staff portraits, 1940's (71)
	v. 28-29	Art Department, 1940's (31)
	v. 30	Library, 1949 (3)
	v. 31	Infirmery, 1947 (4)
	v. 32	Campus Buildings, 1947 (7)
	v. 33	Bennett Hall, 1947 (4)
	v. 34	Sports, 1940's (16)
v. 35	Riding Stable and Club, 1947-1949 (13)	
v. 36	Dad's Day, 1947-1950 (4)	
18	v. 1-3	Students, 1940's (27)
	v. 4-5	Theater, 1940-1941 (17)
	v. 6	Dramatic Club, 1928-1946 (8)
	v. 7	Graduates, 1952-1956 (13)
	v. 8	Campus Scenes, 1953 (9)
	v. 9-11	Student activities, 1953 (33)
	v. 12	Buildings, 1955 (9)
	v. 13	Faculty portraits, 1954-1955 (20)
	v. 14-17	Biographical photos, 1953 (21)
	v. 18-28	Alumnae portraits, 1864-1916 (101)
v. 29	Alumnae, 1935 (6)	
19	v. 1-24	Unidentified ambrotypes, n.d. (24)
20	v. 1	Unidentified ambrotypes, n.d. (1)
	v. 2-7	Unidentified negatives, n.d. (50)
	v. 8-10	Unidentified prints, n.d. (35)
Series V. Financial Records		
21	1	Business reports, 1855-1907, 1954, 1966
	12 volumes	Ledgers, journals, 1896-1906

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
22	10 volumes	Ledgers, 1900-1911
23	7 volumes	Ledgers, 1911-1918
24	7 volumes	Ledgers, 1918-1926
25	8 volumes	Cashbooks, 1900-1909
26	8 volumes	Cashbooks, 1909-1917
27	7 volumes	Cashbooks, 1917-1924

Series VI. Shimer College Publications

28	1	<u>The Seminary Bell</u> , 1860-1861
	2	<u>The Oread</u> , 1869-1895
	3	<u>Annual Calendar</u> , 1896-1912
	4-10	<u>Frances Shimer Record</u> , 1909-1934
29	1-9	<u>Frances Shimer Record</u> , 1934-1960
	10-27	<u>The Record</u> , yearbook, 1938-1959
	28-29	<u>Acropolis</u> , 1960-1961
	30	<u>Recondite</u> , 1965
	31	Frances Shimer Handbooks, 1944-1949
30	1-4	Shimer College Handbooks, [1960-1978]
	5-7	Shimer College <u>Bulletin</u> , [1945-1976]
	8	<u>Excalibur</u> , [1966-1967]
	9	Mt. Carroll Seminary, 1894-1895
	10	Francis Shimer Academy booklets, [1901-1905]
31	1	Francis Shimer booklets, 1930s
	2	Francis Shimer booklets, [1943-1947]
	3	Francis Shimer booklets, [1950-1957]
	4	Francis Shimer booklets, 1960s
	5	"Shimer College Report on Entering Students", 1966
	6	Shimer College, booklets, n.d.
	7	Francis Shimer College pamphlets, n.d., 1976
	8	"General Reading Programs" Upper and Lower Division, n.d.
	9	<u>Bridging the Gap Between School and College</u> , 1953
	10	Song books and musicals, [1911-1923]
	11	poems and stories- booklets, [1900-1905], 1950

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	9
31	12	Kathryn Gray McFarland- In Memory, 1924	
	13	History pamphlets, n.d.	
	14	The Divinity School News, 1941	
	15	Fortieth Annual Reunion, 1893	
	16	Christmas Greetings, n.d.	
	17	Diary, Frances Wood Shimer, January 1, 1852-August 24, 1853, October 12, 1854 (photocopy)	
32	1	Diary, Frances Wood Shimer, Memorandum of Events from Starting from Mt. Carroll on December 30, 1890, December 30, 1890-May 7, 1891 (photocopy)	
	2	Reminiscences of Frances Wood Shimer, 1897-1898 (photocopy)	
	3	Printing cards (7)	
	4	scenic "postcards" Los Angeles (2)	
	5	scenic "postcards" Utah (7)	
	6	Printing plate of lecture hall, n.d.	