

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Low, Elizabeth Anna (1868-1962)** **MC 2002.8**

Materials: Artifacts and photographic plates (c1890-1895)

Volume: 2.0 linear feet (Artifact Boxes 1-4 and Photograph Folders 1-9)

Donor: Gift of Elizabeth Anna Low, 1950

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Elizabeth Anna Low was born on August 21, 1868, the only daughter of Dr. Elisha Warwick Miller Low and his wife Rebecca Jane Hill. In addition to Elizabeth, the Lows had two sons, John Vincent and George Lane Low. The family resided in Lime Ridge, near Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Elizabeth received her early education from the Bloomsburg Literary Institute (later Bloomsburg State College), graduating in 1886. She then attended the Dickinson Preparatory School for a year before enrolling in the college as one of only five female members of the class of 1891. As a student Low was active as class secretary and poet, as well as being the business manager of the Browning Literary Society (the coed equivalent to the two literary societies) and as an editor on the *Microcosm* staff in 1890. She received her bachelor of arts degree from Dickinson in 1891, and three years later she earned a master's degree *in cursu*. In 1952, Low penned an account of her student days at Dickinson, entitled "I was a Co-Ed"; the account is housed in the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections.

After graduation, Low returned to her family home in Lime Ridge and remained there for the rest of her life. She and her brothers inherited a large sum of money from their parents, and thus became generous benefactors to the community. Having never married and having no children of her own, Low was nonetheless keenly interested in the education of the youth in the Bloomsburg area. In 1959 she and her brother John established the E. W. M. Low Foundation (in memory of their father) in order to provide education, recreation, and self-improvement opportunities for area youth; a youth center was built shortly thereafter. Low also displayed her patriotism by serving as chairperson of Center Township's Liberty Bond drive during World War I, as well as being an active member of the Moses VanCampen Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Society of the Colonial Dames of America.

In her later years, Low became less active, and retired to her home in order to keep house for herself and John after the death of their brother George. Elizabeth Anna Low died on October 24, 1962 after suffering two heart attacks. In her will, she continued her generosity by providing her surviving brother with \$3000 a year until his death, after which time the money

would revert to Dickinson College in order to establish the George Lane Low memorial scholarship. She had previously given \$10,000 to the college to provide for a Moses VanCampen Daughters of the American Revolution Scholarship in 1961 to be given to needy students, preferably from Columbia County. Other beneficiaries of Low's will included the Bloomsburg Hospital and the Low Foundation. After John's death in 1971, a grandfather clock was also donated to Dickinson in memory of Elizabeth.

Sarah Gere Yocum was a classmate and friend of Elizabeth Anna Low. She was born in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania on November 21, 1871 to Andrew Duncan Yocum and Laura Gere Yocum. She entered Dickinson in 1887 but left the college in 1889 without graduating. Her sister Alverda and brother Albert Duncan also attended Dickinson as members of the class of 1892 and 1889, respectively; only the latter graduated. Yocum continued her painting and eventually earned her living as an artist. She moved with her siblings first to Smyrna, Delaware in 1895, and then to Millville, New Jersey in 1900. She died on December 8, 1957 in New Orleans, Louisiana and was buried in Millville. Little else is known of her.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Elizabeth Anna Low Artifacts Collection contains fine china, glass plate positive photographs and other items donated by Elizabeth Anna Low, class of 1891. The collection has been arranged into two series: Artifacts and Photographic Plates. The Artifacts series is designated as AC 2002.8 and contains such items as teacup and saucer sets, framed paintings, and bowls and dishes of various sizes. These items were hand-painted by Sarah Yocum and given to Low as gifts; china painting was a popular hobby for young ladies of the 1890s and early 1900s. Each item painted by Yocum is signed with her initials and a star above a heart. Although the framed paintings do not carry this signature, the paintings are similar in style and technique to those designated as Yocum's work. The items in this series have been arranged in no particular order; the item numbers were assigned arbitrarily according to ease of storage and housing. A descriptive note of each item appears in the series inventory.

The Photographic Plates series is comprised of fourteen glass plate positive photographs. The plates are 4.25" x 6.5" and are in black and white. They have been designated as PC 2002.8 and are housed separately in folders within the Dickinson College Photograph Collection. The photographs are of young men and women, although the identities of most of the persons in the photographs are unknown. The plates are mostly duplicates and have been arranged in no particular order, with notations where more than one plate is housed in a folder.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - AC 2002.8

ARTIFACTS

- | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| Item 01) | Green and white soap dish with lid |
| Item 02) | White and pink envelope box |
| Item 03) | Triangular dish with bird |
| Item 04) | White and green scalloped bowl |

BOX 2 - AC 2002.8

ARTIFACTS (cont.)

- Item 05) White bowl and saucer
- Item 06) Small white teacup and saucer with cherubs
- Item 07) Heart-shaped white teacup and saucer with roses

BOX 3 - AC 2002.8

ARTIFACTS (cont.)

- Item 08) Set of small white bowls with "E. A. L." painted in gold (4)
- Item 09) Green tray with Romeo and Juliet
- Item 10) White tray with cherub
- Item 11) Gold feather-shaped quill penholder
- Item 12) Miniature portrait on ivory of a lady, framed

BOX 4 - AC 2002.8

ARTIFACTS (cont.)

- Item 13) Pink and green vase with cap
- Item 14) Watercolor of a man and woman, framed
- Item 15) Painting on fabric of young girl, framed
- Item 16) Drawing of a man and woman, framed
- Item 17) Painting on marble of an angel, framed

PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES - PC 2002.8

PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES

- Folder 01) Sarah Gere Yocum [?], seated, wearing white dress – c1890 (2)
- Folder 02) Sarah Gere Yocum [?] (partial of above) – c1890 (2)
- Folder 03) Sarah Gere Yocum [?] (partial of above) – c1890
- Folder 04) Young woman in plaid dress – c1890 (2)
- Folder 05) Young woman (same as above), in black dress – c1890 (2)
- Folder 06) Young woman (same as above), with striped cravat – c1890
- Folder 07) Unidentified group of seven young women – c1890 (2)
- Folder 08) Unidentified group of seven young women (same as above) – c1890
- Folder 09) Unidentified group of three young women and two men – c1890