

Sarah Orr Personal Papers

Dates

c. 1905 - 1927

Extent and Material

18.5 cm of textual materials

1 coin

1 box of art supplies

Biographical Sketch

Sarah Elizabeth Orr was born on May 12, 1868 in Downie Township, Perth County to Thomas Orr Sr. (1833-1914) and Frances *Noble* Orr (1834-1911). Sarah was the Orr family's sixth child. Her siblings include, Martha Ann (1856-1890), John (1858-1900), Thomas Jr. (1861-1867), Joseph (1863-1938), and William Charles (1865-1951.) Sarah had two younger brothers, Robert Thomas (1870-1957) and Henry Noble (1874-1917).

Her father, Thomas Sr. moved his young family to the Stratford area in 1856 after first emigrating to Pennsylvania from Ireland as a young man. In Stratford, Thomas Sr. was a builder and construction worker and was responsible for building of many Stratford homes, including the Orr family residence on 50 Cobourg Street where the family lived from 1873 onward. Today, the family residence operates as the work building for Orr Insurance established by her younger brother R. Thomas.

Sarah took courses at the Ontario School of Art (now, OCAD University) between 1886-1887. There are also a few provincial examinations from the University of Toronto ranging between 1885-1887. Sarah attended the Toronto Normal School – at the time the only teachers college in Canada – and is noted as working as a Public School Teacher in the 1891 Census. She likely attended teachers' college at some point in the later half of the 1880s.

Sarah worked in multiple family businesses. For years she is listed as a Book Keeper at a Dry Goods Store – her brother William owned one – and Sarah was known for working as a secretary at Orr Insurance.

Sarah was Presbyterian and as involved in many missionary societies, including the Women's Missionary Society and the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. She attended Knox Presbyterian Church in Stratford for much of her life and was a life member of the Gordon Auxiliary of Knox Church. She was a devoted feminist and spent much of her time in local

women's societies, like the Y.W.C.A. She was a founding member of the Stratford Chapter of the National Women's Society.

From at least 1921 onwards, Sarah lived with friend Helen Nichol (1868-1935) who was involved with many of the same circles as Sarah was. Sarah never married and lived in the Orr house at 50 Cobourg (now the site of Orr Insurance) until her death on August 31, 1932.

Scope and Content

This fonds consists of correspondence and other textual materials belonging to Sarah E. Orr. The material includes bank books and minutes for a variety of organizations Orr was involved in including: the Y.W.C.A. Stratford Club, the Stratford Order of the Council of Women and the Art Culture and Fortnightly Club; and a variety of Missionary societies including the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

There are also a variety of chequebooks belonging to various organizations Sarah was a part of, as well as her own personal bank books and address books.

The collection has some correspondence detailing the aftermath of her brother, Henry N. Orr's death during World War I. This includes friends offering their condolences to Sarah, but also correspondence between a variety of Canadian companies where Henry held shares. This correspondence also includes Sarah's correspondence with a Toronto company to establish a memorial stained-glass window in Knox Presbyterian Church in remembrance of her brother. Finally, there are a few letters from soldiers during World War I detailing their experiences in the war.

Notes

1. Some of the materials in this fonds likely belonged to other Orr family members, such as her brothers William and R. Thomas, as well as some of her nieces and nephews. In particular, 72.27.420 (A-C) details a letter that likely belonged to one of Sarah's nieces from her brother William.

| 4Y5.30 | Sarah Orr Personal Papers, Part 1 | |
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| File # | File Title | Description |
| 1 | 72.27.395 (A-HH) | Includes bank books, cheque books and receipt books; mix of personal and varying organizations (King's Daughters); 1884 one cent coin; personal directory (1925-1926) |
| 2 | 72.27.396 (A-E) | Bulletins, <i>The Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada</i> , May 1925. |
| 4 | 72.27.397 (A-B) | <i>Greenshields & Company's Monthly Review</i> , Vol. VI., No. 12 – Montreal – December, 1917 |
| 5 | 72.27.398 | Letter to the Shareholders of Dominion Cannery Ltd. To Henry N. Orr (February 1918) |
| 6 | 72.27.399 (A-C) | Notice to the Shareholders of the Monarch Knitting Co. in Dunnville, Ontario. Dated March 1918. |
| 7 | 72.27.400 (A-N) | Correspondence regarding the shares & estate of Henry N. Orr |
| 8 | 72.27.401 (A-D) | Correspondence regarding the shares of Henry N. Orr |
| 9 | 72.27.402 (A-G) | Correspondence regarding the notice of dividends for the Canadian Locomotive Company and the Presidential Trust Company. |
| 10 | 72.27.403 (A-F) | Notice to Shareholders of the Duluth-Superior Traction Company (January 1918) for Henry N. Orr |
| 11 | 72.27.404 | Letter from Cawthra Muluck & Company (Toronto Stock Exchange) to Henry N. Orr (December 11, 1917) |
| 12 | 72.27.405 | Letter to the Shareholders of the Dome Mines Company Ltd. (November 1917) |
| 12a | 72.27.406 (a-b) | Letter from the National Portland Cement Co. Ltd (1917) |
| 13 | 72.27.407 | A Licence to operate Radio Receiving Equipment for Miss S.E. Orr dated 15 June 1931. |
| 14 | 72.27.408 (A-C) | City of Stratford Assessment Schedule – 50 Cobourg St – 1926 |

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| | | City of Stratford Assessment Schedule – 84 Ontario – 1925 |
| 15 | 72.27.409 (A-E) | Certificates of Proficiency from the Ontario School of Art – for Sarah Orr and Harry Orr. |
| 16 | 72.27.410 | Flower Order – Lakeview Gardens |
| 17 | 72.27.411 (A-E) | Correspondence re: Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod Invitation to the Opening of Parliament (Feb. 1932) |
| 18 | 72.27.412 (a-c) | Correspondence re: N.T. Lyon Glass Co. Memorial window in Knox Church for Henry N. Orr (March 1919) |
| 19 | 72.27.413 (A-LLL) | Correspondence re: finances Y.W.C.A. |
| 20 | 72.27.414 (A-B) | Order & receipt for book |
| 21 | 72.27.415 (A-P) | Correspondence re: the creation of the Organization of the National Council of Women in Stratford, Ont. Including first meeting minutes. |
| 22 | 72.27.416 (A-E) | Letters from the Bethnal Green Medical Mission |
| 23 | 72.27.417 (A-O) | Correspondence re: Medical Missions subscriptions & renewals |
| 24 | 72.27.418 (A-J) | Report of the Work in the Girls' High School for 1919 |
| 25 | 72.27.419 | Minutes of the Art Culture and Fortnightly Clubs Oct. 2 nd 1905 – Sarah Orr Secretary |
| | | Membership Certificates from the Women's Missionary Society – Presbyterian Church |
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| 4Y5.54 | Sarah Orr Personal Papers, Part 2 | |
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| File # | File Title | Description |
| 1 | 72.27.420 (A-C) | Letter from Hilliard Queen to "A Friend" Details travel from Camp Borden to Halifax via train, Halifax to Liverpool via boat and arriving at Seaford Camp. Dated Nov. 30/1916 |

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| 2 | 72.27.421 (A-C) | Letter from "Frank" in Camp Borden dated Oct. 17/1916 |
| 3 | 72.27.422 (A-C) | Letter to Sarah Orr from Margaret Wa[r]d re: the death of Henry N. Orr |
| 4 | 72.27.423 (A-B) | Letter re: memorial window in Knox Church for Henry N. Orr |
| 5 | 72.27.424 (A-D) | Correspondence re: the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada c. 1920; suggesting that Sarah dealt with the finances of the Western Division. |
| 6 | 72.27.425 | Letter to Sarah Orr from Kathleen Davidson re: Life Membership from the Gordon Auxilliary |
| 7 | 72.27.426 (A-B) | Letter to Sarah from Margaret Noble 1925 |
| 8 | 72.27.427 (A-B) | Letter to Sarah Orr from "Ruth" Feb. 17 th 1926 re: telling Sarah of her engagement. |
| 9 | 72.27.428 (A-C) | Correspondence re: International Order of the King's Daughters and Sons |
| 10 | 72.27.429 (A-B) | Letter to Sarah Orr from "Ruth" Nov. 10 th 1926 |
| 11 | 72.27.430 (A-B) | Letter to Sarah Orr from Margaret E. [?] |
| 12 | 72.27.431 (A-W) | Letters to Sarah re: an illness and operation in Toronto c. November 1927 |
| 13 | 72.27.432 (A-UU) | Cards and postcards to Sarah Orr re: an illness and operation in Toronto c. 1927 |
| 14 | 72.27.433 (A-J) | Misc. papers and writing |
| 15 | 72.27.434 (A-T) | Diary of a trip written by [Sarah?] in July 1920 |
| 16 | 72.27.435 (A-B) | Monday Night Reading Club 1926-1927 Programme |
| 17 | 72.27.436 (A-D) | Bank Books for Supervised Playground c. 1917 |
| 18 | 72.27.437 | Poets of Travel Club Minutes |
| 19 | 72.27.438 (A-III) | Drawing Cards, Art Supplies |
| | | Sarah Orr Provincial Examinations |