

## Finding Aid to the Eva Nelson Photograph Collection

### Nelson, Eva, 1914-1998

Eva Nelson Photograph Collection, 1896–1980 (bulk 1914–1957)

178 photographic prints

Collection number: Photo 2066

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### OVERVIEW

**Links:** Finding Aid to the [Eva Nelson Papers](#)  
Finding aid to [Eva Nelson Memoirs](#)  
View collection in [Digital Horizons](#)

**Access:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

**Provenance:** Donated by Rodney Nelson, 2006 (Acc. 2783).

**Property rights:** The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

**Copyrights:** Copyrights to this collection is held by the Institute.

**Citation:** Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU, Fargo (item number)

### BIOGRAPHY

Eva Gunderson was born in Noonan, North Dakota, on May 12, 1914, the eldest of five children. Her parents, Ole S. and Signe (Johnson) Gunderson, moved several times, finally settling near Christine, where Eva graduated from high school in 1930. Upon graduation, Eva worked as a maid in her home area and in Fargo for several years before she received her teaching certificate from Moorhead Teachers College in 1937. Eva began her teaching career the following year in a one-room schoolhouse in central North Dakota and continued as an educator for thirty years. In January 1941, Eva married Rudolph A. Nelson. They had two children—Rodney and Barbara. Rudy and Eva were divorced in 1956. After retiring from teaching in 1978, Eva began her second career as writer and historian. She wrote her memoirs, completed family trees, and helped to

organize the Christine High School reunions held in 1980 and 1983. Eva (Gunderson) Nelson died October 23, 1998.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Eva Nelson Photograph Collection contains 178 images, of which 171 are black and white images, 7 are color images, and 1 is a Polaroid image. The black and white images are a mix of platinotypes (or platinum prints) and gelatin silver prints. These prints have been arranged into three series: Photograph Album Series; Family and Friends Series; Nelson Travel Photographs Series.

The **Photograph Album Series** is comprised of album pages originally inserted with Eva Nelson's memoirs. The prints in this series are a mix of platinotypes and gelatin silver snapshots, and many have been fixed onto black paper using corner mounts. A small number have been attached more permanently. Images in this series are mostly portraiture and include photographs of Eva, her parents, siblings, and extended family. Nearly every photograph in this series is identified and dated. Eva also included photographs of her family's homes, threshing crews on the family farm, and Christine High School. Eva also included some written materials on her album pages. In some cases, these materials are very fragile and have been photocopied and placed within the corresponding manuscript collections. On page 3 of the album, there is a concert program, the copy of which can be found in Institute Mss 218, Box 1, Folder 2. On page 32 of the album, there is a telegram Eva received from her aunt and uncle, the copy of which can be found in Institute Mss 218, Box 1, Folder 8. On page 34 there is a letter, the copy of which can be found in Institute Mss 218, Box 1, Folder 9. On page 38 of the album, there is an envelope containing a poem from Eva's first boyfriend, and on page 39 there is an envelope containing a card. The copies can be found in Institute Mss 218, Box 1, Folder 10.

The **Family and Friends Series** is comprised of ten images, mostly gelatin silver snapshots. The majority of photographs in this series are of Eva and her son, Rodney. There is also a photograph of Barbara's (Eva's daughter) Sunday school class, although Barbara is not pictured. There is a partially identified photograph of a colleague at the Parshall School, and an unidentified photograph of a young man.

The **Nelson Travel Photographs Series** consists of seven images. There are four landscape images of the Missouri River taken in 1935. Photographs of Westby, Montana in 1967 feature Eva's aunt and uncle's home and the local Lutheran Church. There is one image titled "Saddle Butte;" it is a landscape photograph taken in 1980, but no other identification is provided.

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