

Finding Aid to the Elizabeth Preston Anderson Papers

Anderson, Elizabeth Preston, 1861-1954

Elizabeth Preston Anderson Papers, 1889-1954

.6 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 653

[Biography](#)

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OVERVIEW

Links: Under the Prairie Winds, autobiographical reminiscence by E.P. Anderson

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

Provenance: Donated by Mrs. Frank Beasley, 1956 (Acc. 653).

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Elizabeth Preston Anderson Papers, MS 653, Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

Related resources: Elizabeth Preston Anderson scrapbook, 1898-1940 on microfilm at State Historical Society of North Dakota (MSS 10108)

BIOGRAPHY

Elizabeth Preston was born April 27, 1861 at Decatur, Indiana, the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Elam S. Preston. Elizabeth received her education at DePauw University, Taylor University, and the University of

Minnesota. In 1880, the family moved to Tower City, North Dakota, and Miss Preston taught at Sanborn and Page, North Dakota.

Miss Preston became interested in the prohibition issue and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and was active in the adoption of prohibition by North Dakota in 1889. In 1893, Elizabeth became president of the North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union, a post she held until her retirement in 1932.

On December 11, 1901, Elizabeth married Rev. James Anderson, a Methodist Episcopal pastor. Until his retirement in 1935, they resided at Drayton, Valley City, Fargo, Grafton, and Sheldon, North Dakota. Following their retirement, the couple resided in Florida and Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, until his death in 1941. Mrs. Anderson died at Miles City, Montana on November 30, 1954.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Elizabeth Preston Anderson Papers document the life and activities of a woman who 'influenced North Dakota politics by resisting efforts to reintroduce liquor to a dry state, by battling along with the suffragists to obtain the vote for North Dakota women, and by espousing a rigid moral program.' Her papers have been organized into four series: Correspondence, Autobiography, Histories, Pamphlets and Brochures, Speeches, *Western Womanhood*, and *White Ribbon Bulletin*.

The [Correspondence Series](#) is very sketchy, with most of it from the 1890s. The early correspondence includes a letter from her father to her brother Wilbur, a letter from her mother, and a number from the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union including from Frances E. Willard. The later letters are with family, A.G. Burr, North Dakota friends, and several greetings from Mrs. Anderson to the annual meeting of the national and North Dakota Christian Temperance Union.

The [Autobiography Series](#) contains a typed copy (145 pages) of her autobiography entitled *Under the Prairie Winds*. It was copied in 1958 by NDSU staff, likely from a handwritten original. It spans from Miss Preston's childhood starting in Indiana and up to 1951. It gives a nice summary of the major events in her life and her involvement in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and North Dakota politics. A digital full-text version is available.

The [Histories Series](#) includes family history material concerns the Preston and Hill families and includes a typed copy of an obituary for Rev. James Anderson. There are two typed histories of the North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union, one is four leaves and the other nine.

The [Pamphlets and Brochures Series](#) includes printed pamphlets and flyers by Mrs. Anderson, the North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union; most of which concern prohibition issues. Of particular note is the 27-page pamphlet *Primer for North Dakota Voters* written by Mrs. Anderson and published in 1920 by the North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Also included is a poem *Our Conductor* written by Vincent Ravi of Munich, N.D. and dated 1900.

The [Speeches Series](#) includes both handwritten and typed speeches made by Mrs. Anderson. They cover a number of topics but primarily deal with prohibition. There is a typed copy (18 leaves) of a speech she gave at Sanborn and Tower City, N.D. in 1889 entitled *Prohibition*. Although about half of her speeches are undated, the rest are mainly from 1889 to 1901.

[Western Womanhood](#), which began publication in 1894, at Buffalo, North Dakota, for the “advancement of womankind”, soon became the official publication of the North Dakota Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, and was succeeded by the [White Ribbon Bulletin](#) in 1889. The run of *Western Womanhood* is complete, but the *White Ribbon Bulletin* is very incomplete, with the major holdings between 1899 and 1902. A complete run of *White Ribbon Bulletin* (1890-1991) is available on microfilm at the Institute (Microfilm HV5235.N9 N67).

SEPARATION RECORD

The following non-manuscript items were removed from the Elizabeth Preston Anderson papers and have been sent to the section indicated.

Books – Institute book collection; consult the library catalog for call number and location.

History of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Dakota, compiled by Miss Emma L. Swartz, Rapid City, South Dakota, 1900.

Manual of the Prohibition Law of North Dakota 1910, by Judge Chas. A. Pollock. Published by North Dakota State Enforcement League, 1910.

The Story of Fifty Years, North Dakota Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, 1889-1939, by Elizabeth Preston Anderson.

Photographs - Institute photograph collection (Photo Mss 653)

One photo of Rev. James Anderson and first grandchild, 1921

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Contents
1/1	Finding aid and biographical information
	Correspondence Series
1/2	1891-1898

1/3 1922-1954

Autobiography, *Under the Prairie Winds* Series

1/4 Chapters 1-2
1/5 Chapters 3-5
1/6 Chapters 6-8
1/7 Chapters 9-11
18 Chapters 12-14

Histories Series

1/9 Family History material
1/10 Miscellaneous
1/11 North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union Histories

Pamphlets and Brochures Series

1/12 Elizabeth Preston Anderson
1/13 Miscellaneous
1/14 North Dakota
1/15 Poetry of Mr. Vincent Ravi

Speeches Series

1/16 1889-1890
1/17 1892-1899
1/18 1900-1902, 1933
1/19 Undated
1/20 Undated

***Western Womanhood* Series**

1/21 1894, July-December
1/22 1895
1/23 1896, January-June
1/24 1896, July-December
1/25 1897, January-June
1/26 1897, July-December
2/1 1898, January-June
2/2 1898, July-December

***White Ribbon Bulletin* Series**

2/3 April 1899-January 1900

2/4 February 1900-January 1901
2/5 February 1901-January 1902
2/6 February 1902-September 1902
2/7 April 1903-1956