

Finding Aid to the Fannie Mahood Heath Papers

Heath, Fannie Mahood, 1864-1931

Fannie Mahood Heath Papers, 1923-1941

.2 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 80

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OVERVIEW

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

Provenance: Donated by Mrs. H.L. Walster, 1957 and Pearl Heath Frazer, 1964 (Acc. 890).

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Fannie Mahood Heath Papers (Ms 80), Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

BIOGRAPHY

Fannie Mahood was born near Spring Valley, Minnesota on March 5, 1864, the daughter of John and Elizabeth Mahood. She came to Grand Forks, N.D. in 1881 and that year married Frank Arnold Heath. He was born at Niagara, Ontario, Canada on March 20, 1853 and came to Grand Forks, N.D. in 1877. The next year he homesteaded on land in Brenna Township Grand Forks. Fannie and Frank settled on the farm and raised two daughters, Pearl and Zaidee.

Fannie Mahood Heath became known as the 'Flower Lady' of North Dakota, transforming their farm into a garden of trees, shrubs, flowers and other plants. She also wrote many articles in floral magazines and kept extensive correspondence with people across the United States. She was a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Horticultural Society. Fannie died September 29, 1931 and Frank in 1937.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The primary item in the **Fannie Mahood Heath Papers** is a copy of her 152 leaf manuscript “My North Dakota Garden or Prairie Flowers for Your Garden” that provides a rich source in documenting her life-long dedication to growing plants in North Dakota. In addition there is biographical material, several letters, a sales catalog compiled by her and a North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station bulletin written by her and A.F. Yeager.

The **Correspondence File** consists of four letters from Mrs. Heath to Dr. and Mrs. Walster, written from 1923 to 1925, in which she discusses her plants and apparently sold items to the Walsters.

The **Subject Files Series** includes an original copy of Mrs. Heath’s catalog *Hardy Wild Flowers of Praireland* that lists ‘choice Alpines and other Rock Garden plants.’ For each she gives a brief description, growth height, blooming period and for some a price. There is a file containing carbon copies of typed lists of fruit varieties, flowers by color and alpine plants under trial in her garden.

The main portion of the collection is a carbon copy of “My North Dakota Garden or Prairie Flowers for Your Garden,” by Fannie Mahood Heath, ‘Flower Woman of North Dakota’ which was “Compiled by [her daughter] Pearl Heath Frazer, B.S. from magazine articles, manuscripts and letters written by her mother, Mrs. Heath.” It consists of the manuscript (152 leaves), original drawings and watercolors of various plants, and an index (42 leaves) to all plants mentioned in the manuscript.

The Newspaper Clippings file contains two articles, one from unknown newspaper is titled ‘Woman Develops Lovely Foliage on Barren N.D. Farm: Her Garden is Among State’s Beauty Spots,’ and the other is her obituary in the Grand Forks Herald, September 30, 1931. The North Dakota Agricultural Extension Service Special Circular *Perennial Flowers for North Dakota Homes* is a reprint of the original edition (North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 170) published in 1923 and authored by A.F. Yeager and Mrs. Heath. This 1941 edition is a tribute to Mrs. Heath and includes a two-page biographical sketch of Mrs. Heath noting her contributions in the area of horticulture.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

| Box/Folder | Content |
|------------|---|
| 1/1 | Finding aid, and Historical information |
| 1/2 | Correspondence, 1923-1925 |
| | Subject Files Series |
| 1/3 | <i>Hardy Wild Flowers of Praireland</i> , by Fannie M. Heath |
| 1/4 | List of fruit varieties, flowers by color, and alpine plants under trial |
| 1/5 | <i>My North Dakota Garden or Prairie Flowers for Your Garden</i> , by Fannie Mahood Heath |
| 1/6 | Newspaper clippings, 1931 |
| 1/7 | <i>Perennial Flowers for North Dakota Homes</i> , by A. F. Yeager and Fannie M. Heath, 1941 |