

Finding Aid to the Fargo College Photograph Collection

Fargo College (N.D.)

Fargo College Photograph Collection, 1890s-1960s

101 photographic prints

2 photograph albums (549 prints)

2 film negatives (Neg. 5x7P 420 & 421)

Collection number: Photograph Mss 153

Folio 36

[History](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Links: Finding aid to [Fargo College Records](#) (Mss 153).

View collection on [Digital Horizons](#)

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

Provenance: Donated by Arthur F. Stocker, 1961, 1962 (Acc. 1133 & 1196) and Yankton College, Yankton, S.D. 1988 (Acc. 2223).

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

Copyrights: Copyrights to this collection is not held by the Institute.

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

HISTORY

Fargo College was an institution of higher learning that existed in Fargo between 1887 and 1922. At the time of its opening, the only other colleges in the area were Moorhead Normal School, which had also

opened in 1887, and the soon to be defunct Bishop Whipple School, also in Moorhead. It was located near Island Park and where now stands Western States Life Insurance Company, just east of 7th Street South. The first stirrings of the college occurred within the Congregational Church in 1882, with whom the college was affiliated. It opened its doors in 1887, when North Dakota was still Dakota Territory, Rev. George B. Barnes was hired as its first president in the fall of 1888, and the school graduated its first class, two people, in 1896. At its peak, Fargo College enrolled approximately 600 students, with its largest graduating class being twenty-five in 1917. The campus would eventually comprise four buildings, Jones Hall, Dill Hall, the Conservatory of Music, and a Carnegie Library.

Low enrollment, lack of foresight on the part of the school's leadership, and ever persistent financial problems would perennially beset the college. World War I would also take a heavy toll on the school's student population. Efforts to maintain the necessary funding needed to operate the school had varied success over the years. In 1922, the college was forced to close due to insufficient financial support. Throughout the 1920s though, efforts to raise the necessary funds to reopen the school were aggressively sought. By 1929, almost half of the \$500,000 needed had been raised. But the stock market crash and the ensuing depression doomed any further chances of the school reopening.

In 1930, the school merged with Yankton College in Yankton, South Dakota, which was also affiliated with the Congregational Church. In 1940, the Fargo Board of Education and Western States acquired the Fargo College property. That same year, both Dill and Jones Hall were demolished. The Carnegie Library remained as the home of Western States until 1964, when it too was demolished.

At its height, Fargo College was a thriving organ of classical learning in an essentially agriculturally-minded prairie area. The alumni of the school remained very active well into the late 1960's, and the spirit of the school lived on at Yankton College, until it too closed its doors in 1985.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Fargo College Photograph Collection** documents the students, faculty, buildings, social life and the Board of Trustees members of the college. It is an eclectic collection, being the combination of photographs transferred with the Fargo College records by Yankton College upon its closure, together with a small number of prints transferred from the Frederick E. Stratton Photograph Collection. The collection has been organized into two series: Topical and Photograph albums.

The **Topical Series** includes a wide variety of photograph of students, both individual and groups; faculty; campus buildings, classes groups, Board of Trustee members, the library dedication, and a small number of snapshots of alumni gatherings from the 1950s and 1960s. The Board of Trustees file contains a nice series of professional portraits of members, likely from the 1910s. Of particular note is the series of images documenting the dedication of the Library on September 5, 1910 at which Theodore Roosevelt gave the main talk.

The **Photograph Albums Series** includes two albums kept by students William Frederick Keye and Deborah Hall Hertz. The Keye album (521 prints), although none of the images are identified or dated, is a wonderful collection of images documenting many aspects of Fargo College life from circa 1910 to his

graduation in 1913. It begins with the dedication of the campus library in September 1910. There are numerous informal snapshots of students, both individual and groups, in a variety of social settings. Some are apparently taken off-campus, likely on field trips to include boating on a river and picnics. The album concludes with graduation ceremony, a parade and a pageant. William Keye of Fargo graduated in 1913.

The Deborah Hall Hertz album (28 prints) includes a mixture of clippings from newspaper and college publications as well as portraits of students and the 1916 graduation. There only a few group and social scenes. Deborah Hall, of Elbow Woods, N.D., graduated in 1916.

FOLDER LIST

Folder	Contents (number of images)
0	Finding aid
	Topical Series
1	Buildings (20)
2	Students – Individuals (3)
3	Students – Groups (15)
4	Classes (5)
Mss 36	Graduating class, 1906 (1)
5	Organizations (6)
6	Athletics (6)
7	Faculty & administration (8)
8	Trustees (13)
9	Alumni (9)
10	Library dedication, Sept. 5, 1910 (15)
	Photograph Albums Series
11	William Frederick Keye photograph album (521 prints)
12	Deborah Hall Hertz photograph album (28 prints)