

Finding Aid to the Katherine (Sorlie) McLeod Papers

McLeod, Katherine (Sorlie), 1900-1995

Katherine (Sorlie) McLeod Papers, 1908-1926

.2 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 246

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY

Katherine Sorlie was born on May 25, 1900 in Buxton, North Dakota. Her father was Oscar James Sorlie and her mother was Blanche (Esterley) Sorlie. After graduating from Buxton High School, she attended the University of North Dakota from where she graduated in 1921. The next years she taught high school English in several towns in North Dakota. In 1927 she married E. B. McLeod in Buxton. The couple lived in Jamestown, North Dakota; Hibbing, Minnesota; Atlantic, Iowa; Cherokee, Oklahoma; Pond Creek, Oklahoma; and Enderlin, North Dakota, before they settled in Lisbon, North Dakota. E.B. McLeod worked as superintendent of schools in Lisbon and Katherine McLeod worked as a substitute teacher. E. B. McLeod died in 1976. The couple had three children, Donald Bartlett McLeod, Katherine Mary (Kay) McLeod and Alexander Oscar McLeod. Katherine McLeod's father O. J. Sorlie and her brother O.J.

Sorlie II both served for a time in the North Dakota Legislature. Katherine McLeod died on July 10, 1995.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Katherine Sorlie McLeod Papers** consist, for the most part, of letters written to Mrs. McLeod. The papers also include a few letters that Mrs. McLeod wrote, grade school report cards, teacher contracts, graduation announcements, a draft of what appears to be a school skit and a poem describing a class camping trip. The papers have been organized into two series, Letters and General Files.

The [Letters Series](#) contains letters written by W.G. Fanning, J. Magnus Gronningen, Katherine McLeod, and a number of letters from Mrs. McLeod's family and friends. One set of letters written to Mrs. McLeod were from a young man named William George Fanning who was serving in the U.S. Army in Texas during World War I. Mr. Fanning got Mrs. McLeod's name from someone in his military unit and began to write her, seemingly for lack of anyone else to write. He tells Mrs. McLeod about army life and about Galveston and San Antonio, Texas. Their correspondence lasted over three years. There is a large number of letters from J. Magnus Gronningen. These letters were written during the years 1916-1919 with one letter written in 1926. During this period Mr. Gronningen makes the transition from student at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota to soldier with the U.S. Expeditionary Forces in France. These letters give readers a sense of what life was like for a college student and for a U.S. soldier. Mr. Gronningen served in a hospital in France so he cannot give us first hand information about life in the trenches but he does give us a perspective on France behind the lines during World War I. There is also a collection of letters from Mrs. McLeod's family and friends. These letters were written during the years 1915-1925. During this ten-year period Mrs. McLeod completes high school in Buxton, North Dakota, college at the University of North Dakota, and begins her teaching career in Buxton. These letters typically relay news from home about family members and day-to-day activities. These letters might be helpful for anyone wanting to know more about family life in North Dakota during this period

The [General Files Series](#) contains various items that were found with the letters. Mrs. McLeod's grade school report cards, various high school certificates of completion, college report cards, two teacher contracts, and a few graduation announcement cards are in this series. There are a few newspaper advertisements circa 1916 and a flyer written during World War I that discusses Germany and the war. The series is completed by some World War I post cards, a dialog written for a skit and a poem written about a class trip.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	Contents
1/1	Finding aid, and Biographical material

Letter Series

- 1/2 Katherine McLeod, June 8, 1911-May 9, 1921
- 1/3 W.G. Fanning, March 5, 1916-Jan. 7, 1919
J.M. Gronningen—
- 1/4 Jan. 4, 1916-Dec. 19, 1916
- 1/5 Jan. 27, 1917-Nov. 24, 1917
- 1/6 Jan. 29, 1918-Dec. 16, 1918
- 1/7 Jan. 29, 1919-Dec. 29, 1926
- 1/8 Family and friends, June 25, 1915-Nov. 5, 1925

General Files Series

- 1/9 Various papers, May 22, 1908-July 23, 1926