

S. J. McKee Archives



BC 9: Clark Hall women's residence

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4276>

Part Of: RG 1 Brandon College fonds

Description Level: Series

Series Number: 9

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1906-1953

Physical Description: 51.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

Clark Hall was built in 1906 as a women's residence. The name comes from Dr. C.W. Clark, a physician who believed that women should be as highly educated as possible. To that end, he donated \$30 000 of the \$40 000 dollars needed to construct the building. The residence opened on October 18, 1906 with Miss Ernestine R. Whiteside presiding as Lady Principal.

With the building of Clark Hall came new departments geared towards young women. A Music and Arts department was started, as was a Physical Culture and Expression department. The residence was soon full, and in 1911 the first Clark Hall Annex was created to house 25 women who could not get into Clark Hall proper. This annex was located at 1335 Lorne Ave., and it is still in existence today. The second Clark Hall Annex, that replaced the first, was located on Louise Ave. It is also still standing, and is now an apartment building.

LADY PRINCIPALS/DEAN OF WOMEN:

ERNESTINE ROBERTA WHITESIDE (1906-1918)

Miss Whiteside was born in 1876. She graduated from McMaster University in 1898. In 1906 she was hired as the first Lady Principal of Clark Hall. She served this post capably and was greatly admired by all who met her. In 1918 she resigned as Lady Principal to assume headship of Moulton College in Toronto. She resigned from Moulton in 1930 due to uncertain health. Miss Whiteside was a Board Member of the Women's Baptist Missionary Society, as well as being editor of "The Link and Visitor". She was the corresponding secretary for the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada from 1939 to 1949. Miss Whiteside resigned the editorship of "The Link and Visitor" in 1956. On June 14, 1960, she died in Toronto.

OLIVE A.C. WILKINS (1919-1925)

Olive Agnes Cross was born on June 17, 1891 in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. She received her B.A. from McMaster in 1912. She married Thomas Russell Wilkins on June 17, 1913. Mrs. Wilkins accepted the position of Lady Principal of Clark Hall in 1919. She also was retained as an English Teacher. Mrs. Wilkins resigned in 1925. On May 13, 1937, she died rather suddenly. Mrs. Wilkins personal files are located in the Brandon College Teaching and Administration series.

JANE (JENNIE) TURNBULL (1926-1927)

Jennie Turnbull was born c.1896. She was educated at Brandon Central School and the Brandon Collegiate Institute. Miss Turnbull entered Brandon College in 1911. She graduated with her B.A. in 1915, and followed this with her M.A. in 1916. After taking a Normal Course in Regina, Miss Turnbull returned to join the Brandon College faculty as instructor in French in 1918. She studied at La Sorbonne in Paris during the years 1921 and 1922. Miss Turnbull spent parts of 1919, 1920, 1926, and all of 1927 and 1928 at the University of Chicago, where she secured her Ph.D. During the school year 1926-1927, Miss Turnbull served as Dean of Women (formerly known as Lady Principal). She was a very well-travelled individual, and she was the author of *Essential Traits of French-Canadian Poetry*. In 1963 Miss Turnbull moved to British Columbia, where she died on December 30, 1966. During the time that Miss Turnbull taught at Brandon College, she was an integral part of the college community. She was responsible for the formation of a French Club, and served on various committees and boards with great skill.

ANNIE (EVANS) WRIGHT (1927-1934)

Miss Annie Evans was born on December 29, 1881 in Derbyshire, England. She moved with her family to Canada around 1889. She taught school before entering the Brandon College Business Training Department in 1908. In 1909, Miss Evans was given a position in the Business and Academic Department of the College. In 1915, she married the music professor, Dr. William L. Wright. In 1926, Mrs. Wright received her B.A. degree from Brandon College. She followed that with her M.A. from the University of Chicago in 1927. From 1927 until 1934, Mrs. Wright served as the Dean of Women. From 1927 until 1945, she was employed as a professor of English. She moved to Robson, B.C. with her husband, where she lived until her death in 1959. She was the older sister of Dr. J.R.C. Evans.

DOROTHY WERTHENBACH (1934-1935)

Miss Werthenbach received her early education in Minnesota and Saskatchewan and graduated from the University of Alberta with Honours in History. She took up the profession of teaching. She was an instructor at the Indian Residential School before she accepted the position of Dean of Women in the fall of 1934. She also taught grade 12 History at the College. Miss Werthenbach left Brandon College in 1935, after having spent one year as the Dean of Women. From 1931-1934 she served on the Executive of the Brandon Art Club, including a year as President (1933-1934). At some point after leaving Brandon, Miss Werthenbach married C.G. Nelson and relocated to Calgary. She and her husband had three, possibly four children. Mrs. Nelson died in a plane crash at Moose Jaw.

MARJORIE B. MCKENZIE (1935-1936)

Miss McKenzie was born in Brandon and was a graduate of Brandon Collegiate and Brandon College. She received her B.E. degree from the Columbia College of Expression in Chicago, and her M.Sc. in speech from Northwestern University at Evanston, Illinois. From 1927 to 1930 she was Instructor in Dramatic Art at Brandon College. She resigned to do post-graduate work. In 1935, Miss McKenzie returned as Instructor of Public Speaking in the Theological Department and Dean of Women in Clark Hall. Miss McKenzie resigned as Dean of Women after one year at the post.

SARAH PERSIS DARRACH (1936-1953)

Miss Persis Johnson was born in Rosscarberry, Ireland on February 8, 1886. She was educated in both Ireland and Canada, graduating from the Brandon General Hospital nurses program in 1911. She did her postgraduate work in Chicago. Miss Johnson was the assistant matron at Brandon General Hospital when she left for overseas in 1914 to serve in the war. Miss Johnson enlisted in the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force on May 12, 1915 in London, England. She was overseas until 1918, stationed in both England and France. While there, Miss Johnson was awarded the Royal Red Cross, 2nd class, and the Royal Red Cross,

1st class, the latter of which was awarded to her in 1919 by the Prince of Wales during his visit to Brandon. She became the fourth superintendent of nurses at Brandon General Hospital. Sometime during the 1920's, Miss Johnson married Robert Darrach, who was on the Brandon College Board of Directors. In 1934, she was named a member of the Order of the British Empire (Civilian) for her tireless effort doing charity work. In 1936 she accepted the position of Dean of Women at Brandon College. She served in this post until 1953. In 1971, Brandon College awarded her an honorary L.L.D. Darrach Hall, the Men's Residence on the Brandon University campus, was named for her. Mrs. Darrach died on September 25, 1974.

FLORA COWAN (1953-1967)

Mrs. Flora Cowan was born on July 15, 1902 in Edinburgh, Scotland. She was the daughter of Adam and Helen Cruickshank. She married E.C. Cowan, and they had two children, Franklin and Ruth. From 1953 until Brandon College became Brandon University, she served as the Dean of Women. In 1966 she received the good Citizenship Award of the Golden Boys of Manitoba. She was a member of the I.O.D.E. and a life-member of the International Peace Garden, and the Provincial Council of Women. From 1954 to 1970 Mrs. Cowan served as a member of the Brandon City Council. She was also the Chairman of the Board for Fairview Home, Inc. In 1967, Mrs. Cowan received the Trillium Business and Professional Club Woman of the Year Award. She was also a member of several other community committees. The women's residence at Brandon University, Flora Cowan, is named for her. In December 1980, Mrs. Cowan finally retired from her many positions. She died in Brandon on September 25, 1986 at the age of 84.

Scope and Content:

The records from this series are mainly concentrated in the early years of Clark Hall. Miss Whiteside kept several journals that depict a very in-depth look at college life for young women in the early twentieth century. These records include: a Commonplace book, in which Miss Whiteside kept detailed accounts of the resident women and what was happening in Clark Hall; a "Saturday" book, which describes what she discussed at the meeting she held with the resident women every Saturday; Scrapbooks, which have programs and pictures detailing the everyday life of a College woman. These records are an invaluable source of information on the education of young women at the turn of the century. As well, Mrs. Wilkins files located in the Brandon College Teaching and Learning files give an excellent account of life at Clark Hall.

The series also contains copies of Clark Hall calendars for 1909-1925. There is also one undated calendar, which may be from 1911-1912.

Notes:	The original accession number for the Clark Hall calendars is RP80-45. A copy of the program for the memorial service held at First Baptist Church October 1974 for Sarah Persis Darrach is located in her biography file in the Reading Room.
Storage Location:	RG 1 Brandon College fonds Series 9: Clark Hall Women's Residence
Related Material:	MG 1 1.9 Sarah Persis Darrach fonds Maureen Johnson collection (10-2009) Accession 0104 Brandon University Art Collection, portrait of C.W. Clark M.D. painted by Henrietta Hancock. The portrait currently hangs in the McKee Archives. A brief biographical note concerning Clark appears with the portrait.

Arrangement:

Series has been divided into four sub-series, including: (1) Clark Hall commonplace book, saturday book and chronicle; (2) Clark Hall scrapbooks 1907-1953; (3) Clark Hall calendars 1909 -1925; and (4) Clark Hall student council minutes 1928-1935

