

McLean County Museum of History

Jennie Rayburn Diaries Collection

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1918-1942
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

Brief History

Born in Vermont in 1858, Jane “Jennie” Buttolph’s family came to Bloomington the next year where her father worked for the Chicago & Alton Railroad. The family lived on East Grove Street and she continued to live on that street of the rest of her life.

In 1874, Jennie enrolled at Illinois Wesleyan, about the fourth year IWU admitted women. She wed Calvin Rayburn in 1877, and he eventually became a well known lawyer in Bloomington. They had three sons, one of whom lived only two years. Husband Calvin died in 1924; she continued to live in the same house, sometimes with her sister and occasionally with borders until her death in 1942.

Jennie was active in the local Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for many years. Her life was quintessentially Midwestern upper middle class.

Scope

The collection consists primarily of Jennie's diaries covering the years of her widowhood (1925-1942) when she was 66-84 years of age. Her days were filled with routine activities such as reading the newspaper, listening to the radio including news of the world, walking downtown for shopping, sewing, visiting with friends, reading, writing letters, and attending to household duties. She writes of the lives of her two sons. She also frequently notes the impact of the Depression on local people and those coming to her door to sell something or beg for work or food.

The collection also includes three notebooks she kept as DAR registrar, a registrar's report (1920), and notes on the Roman Empire.

Box and Folder Inventory

Loose Diaries

Daily diaries, with a book for each year from 1925-1942.

Loose DAR Registrar books

Three registrar notebooks, plus her 1920 registrar's report and one such report from a predecessor.

Loose notebook

These appear to be her notes on the Roman Empire.