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Fall 2020

Fall 2020 Newsletter

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2020 FRIENDS of the CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY Fall Newsletter

CHARLES E. SHAIN LIBRARY ☘ GREER MUSIC LIBRARY ☘ LINDA LEAR CENTER FOR SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

CELEBRATING THE 19TH AMENDMENT

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, extending the right to vote to women and the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives has an important unprocessed manuscript collection documenting the struggle. The Connecticut Women's Suffrage Association Collection shows the organizing activities of one of its key members, Grace Gallatin Seton, and gives a glimpse of the inner workings of this important political organization.

The passage of the 19th Amendment was the culmination of decades of activism on the part of local, state, and national advocacy groups. The Connecticut Women's Suffrage Association (CWSA) was one of the earliest of these organizations agitating for full political rights for women. The CWSA was founded in 1869 by Isabella Beecher Hooker, daughter of Lyman Beecher and sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe. It wielded considerable political influence in the 19th century, most significantly expanding women's property rights.

By the early 20th century the effectiveness of the organization had waned and when Beecher stepped down as its first and only president in 1905, the CWSA became completely dormant. It was revived by Katharine Martha Houghton Hepburn (the mother of the famous actress). Hepburn had founded the Hartford Equal Franchise League in 1909 and in the following year merged it with the moribund CWSA, becoming the CWSA's second president.

Hepburn sought to return the organization to its former power by reviving local chapters and recruiting women who could effectively serve as statewide officers. Among the women she recruited was Grace Gallatin Seton. Seton was married to

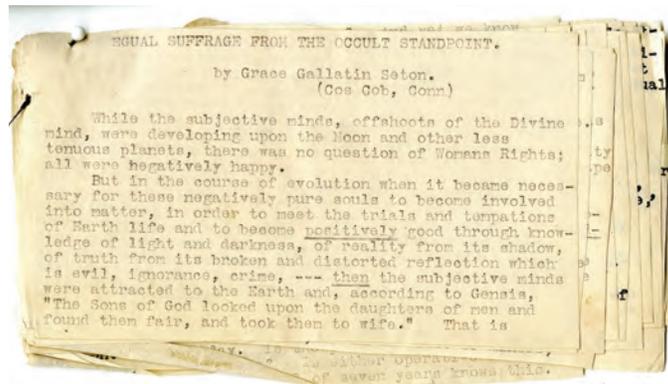
Ernest Thompson Seton, a naturalist, author, and cofounder of the Boy Scouts of America, with whom she shared a love of travel and the outdoors. In the early 1900s she published two books of her travels, *A Woman Tenderfoot* and *Nimrod's Wife* (both held in the Gildersleeve Collection of Children's Literature) and illustrated several of Ernest's books. Seton led the Greenwich chapter of the CWSA and was first vice president under Hepburn.

In 1911 Seton began a campaign to establish local CWSA chapters and raise membership across western Connecticut. The Litchfield County Automobile Campaign brought rallies to 27 town squares across the county. Several automobiles would roll into town packed with local dignitaries, graduates of women's colleges, and CWSA officials. They would assemble in the center of town, give speeches, pass out literature, and conduct membership drives.

Seton was often the featured speaker and many of her eclectic speeches typed on small sheets of paper with handwritten notes are held in the Lear Center. Subjects ranged from why the difference between the sexes necessitated women's right to vote to the role of the occult in suffrage to modern marriage and voting.



The Litchfield Automobile Campaign of 1911



Equal Suffrage from the Occult Standpoint, a lecture by Grace Gallatin Seton



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This and other issues of the Friends of the Library Newsletter may be viewed online at <http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fol/>
 This newsletter was designed by Susan Lindberg,
 December 2020



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

TWO NEW DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AVAILABLE

The Connecticut College COVID-19 Archive and Richard Goodwin's Campaign for Open Space in Connecticut were made available to the public this year. The COVID-19 Archive collects the experiences of members of the Connecticut Col-



lege community during the current pandemic. Consisting of videos and photographs, narratives, and structured responses, the archive seeks to memorialize for future researchers what college life was like through this health crisis. Just as diaries and letters provide an important testimony of the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 on campus, we expect this digital collection will be the basis for future students and scholars to study this period in our history.

In addition to his service as a teacher, researcher, and director of the Connecticut College Arboretum, Richard Goodwin played a critical role in the conservation of open space in New London County, in Connecticut, and in the country as

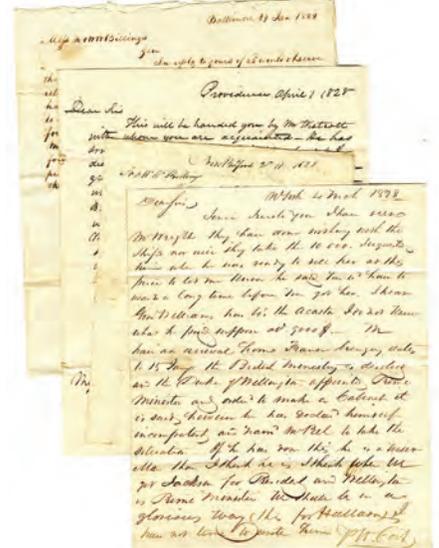
a whole. Last year, students from Economics 212: Environmental Economics used resources in the College Arboretum records, Richard Goodwin's papers, and the papers of the Nature Conservancy to document some of his conservation activities in the area. From their research they created interactive maps that show some of the most significant tracts in the area that Goodwin worked to preserve for future generations and how that land was acquired.

The COVID-19 Archive can be found at <http://learcenter.digital.conncoll.edu/covid19/>. The Open Space map is available at <https://bit.ly/2JBvVYt>. Both projects are ongoing and will continue to be updated with additional content.

NEW ACQUISITION

This past winter, the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives purchased a collection of correspondence and documents from the N. & W.W. Billings whaling firm. The firm was founded by brothers Noyes and William W. Billings in 1823 while they were still in their early 20s. Noyes would translate his business success into a political career, serving as mayor of New London and Lt. Governor of Connecticut. In its 28 years of operation in New London, Billings was one of the largest whaling agencies in the city, operating twelve or more ships.

The collection includes 21 letters to the Billings from Henry and John Coit of New York spanning January through



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CURRENT EXHIBIT

SHAIN LIBRARY EXHIBIT AREA

Celebrating the Centenary of the 19th Amendment, November 1-December 17, 2020

THE FIRST C. C. VOTERS.

On November 2nd, the following girls took advantage of their new privilege and cast their first vote in a Presidential election:

Gertrude Avery	Florence Hopkins
Ruth Bacon	Agnes Leahy
Dorothy Behrens	Jeannette Lettney
Anna Mae Brazos	Olive Littlehales
Mary Bristol	Ethel Mason
Harriet Bynon	Minneola Miller
Nellie English	Ruth Pattee
Anna Flaherty	Amy Peck
Abby Gallup	Dorothy Pryde
Dorothy Gregson	Esther Watrous
Charlotte Hall	

The first Connecticut College voters.

This exhibit displays the work of Grace Gallatin Seton for the Connecticut Women's Suffrage Association (see article on page 1) together with suffrage activists at Connecticut College. Because of limited access to campus, we will put this entire exhibit online in 2021. A link will be made available at <https://bit.ly/2JMglcm>.

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

SHAIN LIBRARY EXHIBIT AREA

The Nature Photography of Michael A. Smith, February 5-March 1, 2021

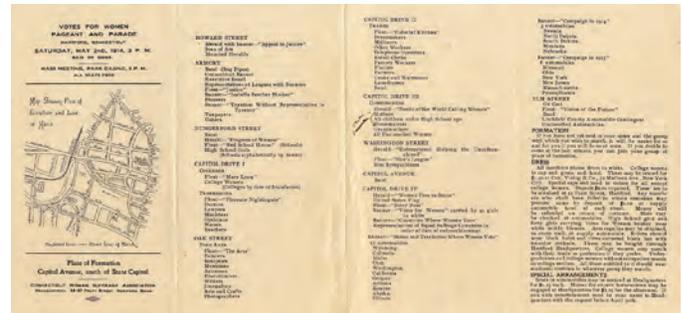


Over the course of a 50-year career, Michael A. Smith was known not only as a self-taught photographer, but as a teacher, critic, and theorist of photography. For nearly his entire career he worked exclusively with

large format cameras and a silver chloride contact printing paper, which he and his wife designed and sold as Lodima photographic paper. He extensively photographed natural landscapes in the American West, but was also known for his urban landscapes and landscapes of continental Europe and Iceland. We feature several of his American landscapes recently donated to the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives.

The American Women's History Collections at Connecticut College, March 5-April 16, 2021

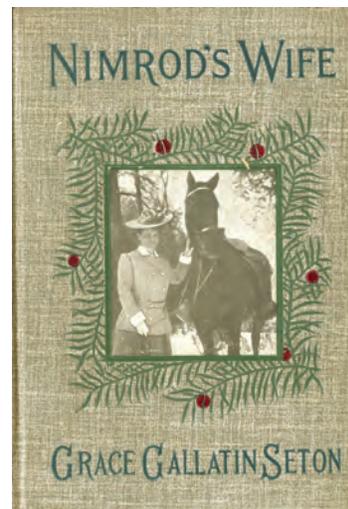
In the late 1940s, Professor of History Chester Destler and College Librarian Hazel Johnson worked together to build manuscript collections for teaching and research at Connecticut College focusing on American Women's History. In honor of Women's History Month, we will feature some of the remarkable documents, correspondence, and photographs from those collections. Because of limited access to campus, we will put this entire exhibit online in 2021. A link will be made available at <https://bit.ly/2JMglcm>.



19TH AMENDMENT

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The success of the Litchfield campaign inspired Hepburn to mount an even larger effort. In 1912 CWSA members



rode the trollies of central Connecticut, staging rallies, raising awareness, and recruiting new members. After these two actions, the CWSA membership soared from a few dozen to several thousand, bringing in much needed revenue for the organization and making it once again a force in state politics.

On May 2, 1914, the CWSA staged a parade in Hartford as part of a nationwide series of demonstrations. Seton was one of the chief organizers of the parade, which consisted of over 2,000 marchers with floats representing women's crucial role in society (as doctors, lawyers, artists, laundresses, florists, and homemakers among other roles) and three female heroes: Joan of Arc, an iconic symbol of the struggle, Isabella Beecher Hooker, and Mary Lyon, the founder of Mount Holyoke College. Graduates of women's colleges marched behind their college banners. There was even a float for "Men sympathizers." Seton was responsible for organizing floats and parade marshals. The collection includes her detailed instructions for participants, rules to keep the parade organized, and funding and orders for parade supplies.

A few years later Seton put her skills and sense of adventure to very different use, organizing the Le Bien-Être du Blessé Women's Motor Unit, which transported people and goods in France during World War I. Her service was recognized by the governments of France and England and may have helped play a role in convincing Americans to support her cause. Upon her return to the United States, Seton continued to serve in the CWSA until it was dissolved in 1921 following the ratification of the 19th Amendment. The battle won, she devoted herself to traveling, writing, and supporting women writers. She didn't entirely abandon politics, however, serving on the Republican National Committee and campaigning for Herbert Hoover and Thomas Dewey.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NEW ACQUISITION

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April, 1828. They record the Coit brothers' sale of shipping and supplies to Billings, containing details of transactions along with invoices. In addition to the Coit correspondence, there are letters from Seth Russell, E.J. Mallett, Jonathan Rogers, and Capt. Lyman Allyn. Russell owned a large whaling firm in New Bedford discussing business with Billings. Mallett, at the time a businessman in Providence, would go on to a notable military career followed by service as U.S. Consul General in Florence, and paymaster of the Union army. Allyn began his whaling career shortly before the Billings brothers went into business and rose rapidly in the firm, soon captaining a ship for Billings.

Taken together the correspondence provides a glimpse of business operations in early 19th century New London and will be an invaluable learning resource for students learning how to do original research in economic history. It also helps supplement extensive archives on the Billings agency held by institutions in the region including the Mystic Seaport, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and the New London County Historical Society.

FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library runs from January 1 to December 31, but it is never too late to join or renew your membership. The dues from the Friends are used to support the acquisition and preservation of materials, lectures, exhibitions, receptions, mailings, and scholarships. If you wish to join, download a form at <http://www.conncoll.edu/information-services/friends-of-the-library/> or contact Benjamin Panciera at bpancier@conncoll.edu or by calling 860-439-2654. Membership has the following levels, named for significant research collections held by the Connecticut College Library: Rachel Carson Collection (\$2500), Eugene O'Neill Collection (\$1000), Beatrix Potter Collection (\$500), Chu-Griffis Collection (\$250), Campus History Collection (\$100), Gildersleeve Book Collection (\$50), and William Meredith Collection (\$25). All members receive the newsletter and invitations to lectures and other events. Those who contribute more than \$50 will also receive borrowing privileges at both the Charles E. Shain and the Greer Music Libraries. Please note that the Connecticut College campus is closed to outside visitors for the duration of the COVID crisis.