

Inventory of the

Laura Cooper
Byron, Illinois

Collection

In the

Regional History Center

RC 44

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Wilbur Cooper of Byron, Illinois donated his mother's diaries and personal papers to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on November 6, 1978.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 1.75
Number of containers: 3
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 44

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Laura Cooper's diaries, located in box one, date from 1892 to 1893, 1938 to 1942, 1944 to 1948, and 1954 to 1965. The diaries offer a chronicle of one woman's day-to-day activities over a number of years including comments on family, deaths of relatives and town members, church activities, and other common situations such as meals and weather.

Box two of the collection contains reminiscences of Mrs. Cooper about Byron's Congregational Church (1897-1924); weekly bulletins, programs, histories, and anniversary booklets from several Byron churches and the Middle Creek Presbyterian Church in Winnebago, Illinois. Mrs. Cooper's husband, John T., was active in granges throughout Ogle County and file 11 consists of grange histories, programs, and reminiscences (1936-1958). Of special interest to the researcher is a Byron Centennial History, 1835-1935.

Several Sunday school books (ca. 1910), children's story books and prayer books are included in box 3. Also in box 3 is a one hundred and ten page scrapbook compiled by Mrs. Cooper which contains newspaper clippings documenting the history of the Cooper and Whitney families and that of Byron itself (1899-1942).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Laura Annie (Whitney) Cooper (1881-1965) was the daughter of Wilbur F. (1848-1937) and Elizabeth (Barton) Whitney (1853-1939). She was a member of the Byron School Board, president of the Congregational Church's Missionary Society, charter member of the Byron Grange, as well as, being active in other local societies and organizations. Mrs. Cooper died of a sudden heart attack on October 31, 1965, at the age of 83.

On January 27, 1902, Laura married John Cooper (1878-1938), the son of Philip (1855-1934) and Mary (Miles) Cooper (1858-1888). Beginning as a farmer, John next became a mail

carrier in the Byron area. Following thirty years of service, he retired to become the supervisor of Byron Township in 1937. Mr. Cooper, like his wife, was active in the community. He was the First Master of the Byron Grange and organizer of other granges in Ogle County including the County Pomona Grange. He was also a Mason and member of the Congregational Church. Mr. Cooper died on June 25, 1938.

The Coopers had one son, Wilbur P., who donated this collection to the Center. He attended Beloit College and the University of Illinois Law School, later becoming a prominent attorney in the Byron area.

SUBJECTS TRACINGS

Byron
Byron, Churches
Byron Grange
Congregationalists
Cooper, Laura
Diaries, 1870-1909
Diaries, 1910-1960
Diaries, 1961-1990
Family Life, History
Grange
Middle Creek Presbyterian Church, Winnebago

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1-6	Diaries, 1892-1893, 1938-1942, 1944-1948, 1954-1965 (24)
2	1	Whitney-Cooper Sympathy Resolutions, 1923, n.d.
	2	Laura Cooper, Byron Congregational Church Reminiscences, 1897-1924
	3	Cooper Momentos, 1949, n.d.
	4	Byron Congregational Church Weekly Bulletins, 1924; United Church of Byron Weekly Bulletins, 1935-1961
	5	United Church of Byron, Programs, Anniversary Booklets, 1934-1963
	6	United Church Program, 1935
	7	Middle Creek Presbyterian Church, Winnebago, Illinois, 1930-1955
	8	Byron Churches: Byron Congregational Church, 1900, 1904 Byron Methodist Episcopal Church, 1937
	9	Church Bulletins, 1926-1937
	10	Byron Centennial Book, 1835-1935
	11	Grange Histories, 1936-1958
	12	Photographs: Cora Carpenter, n.d. Laura Cooper, June 22, 1958
3	1 volume	Scrapbook
	3 volumes	<u>Stories from the Olden Time</u> , Parts I, III, IV
	2 volumes	<u>Hero Stories</u> , Parts I, II
	1 volume	<u>A Book of Prayers</u>
	1 volume	<u>His Last Week</u>
	1 volume	<u>The Acts of the Apostles</u>
	1 volume	<u>Stories of Daniel</u>
	1 volume	<u>Great American Inventions</u>
	1 volume	<u>The Quest of Prince Arros</u>
	1 volume	<u>Bruce of the Cumberlands</u>
	1 volume	<u>The Young Shield Bearer</u>
	1 volume	<u>Chapters from the Country Kitchen</u>
	2 volumes	Two Addresses Delivered by J.S. Braddock to his wife, Ella, Middlecreek, IL