

Katherine E. Conway Papers
1874-1964 (bulk 1874-1926)

MS.1994.015



Archives and Manuscripts Department

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Summary Information

Library Unit	Archives and Manuscripts Department
Creator	Conway, Katherine E., (Katherine Eleanor), 1853-1927
Title	Katherine E. Conway papers
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1874-1926
Date [inclusive]	1874-1964
Extent	4.0 Linear feet (6 boxes)
Language	English

Language of Materials note In English.

Abstract This collection documents the literary and personal life of author Katherine E. Conway. Materials include diaries; drafts of her poetry and journalism; photographs; and scrapbooks.

Preferred Citation note

Identification of item, Box number, Folder number, Katherine E. Conway Papers, BC.1994.015, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Processed by Monica Brown, 1994. This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit.

Restrictions on access

Collection is open for research.

Restrictions on use

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Provenance

Acquired from Helene Conway in 1994.

Biographical note

Journalist and poet Katherine E. Conway was born of Irish parents in Rochester, New York on September 6, 1852. She studied with the Sisters of Charity and the nuns of the Sacred Heart in Rochester, and completed her primary education at St. Mary's Academy (now Nardin Academy) in Buffalo, New York. Upon graduating, Conway worked for several years as a reporter for the Rochester *Daily Union* and was a correspondent for several New York papers. It was during this period that Bishop McQuaid took notice of her, opening up his library to her and encouraging her authorial endeavors.

Family financial difficulties encouraged Conway to pursue an editorial career. From 1873-1878 Conway worked on the *West End Journal*. In 1878 she became assistant editor on the *Catholic Union and Times* in Buffalo. In 1883 John Boyle O'Reilly recognized the quality of her work and offered her a position as assistant editor for *The Pilot* of Boston, an independent lay-owned Catholic weekly. She succeeded James Jeffery Roche as managing editor in 1904, the first female to hold the position. When *The Pilot* became the official church organ for the Archdiocese of Boston in 1908, Conway moved on to become managing editor of *The Republic*, another Boston paper.

Conway simultaneously pursued a literary career as an author of poetry, fiction, and Catholic history. Her written works include poetry collections, *On the Sunrise Slope* (1881), *A Dream of Lilies* (1893), and *The Color of Life* (1927); non-fiction works, *Watchwords from John Boyle O'Reilly, with Literary Estimate* (1891), *The Golden Years of the Good Shepherd in Boston* (1892); *In the Footprints of the Good Shepherd* (1907); *Fifty Years with Christ, the Good Shepherd* (1925); and novels, *The Way of the World and Other Ways* (1900) and *Lalor's Maples* (1901). She also served as an adjunct professor of English at St. Mary's College at Notre Dame, Indiana, from 1911-1915.

Conway was an active public speaker and a protofeminist who fought for "women's traditional dignity in modern life." She was a leader in literary and Catholic circles around Boston, helping to found the League of Catholic Women. She also served as a member of the executive council of the New England Women's Press Club and as chairperson of its literary committee. She was the first Catholic woman to address the primarily Protestant Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston. Among her notable public addresses were: "The Blessed Among Women" and "Some Christian Ideas," presented originally in the Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, and "The Ideals of Christian Womanhood," written for the Boston Catholic Union.

In 1912, Conway was awarded the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice by Pope Pius X and in 1917, she was presented the Laetare Medal by Notre Dame University. She died on January 2, 1927.

Sources:

Cullen, James B., ed. *The Story of the Irish in Boston*. Boston: James B. Cullen & Company, 1889.

Delaney, John J. *Dictionary of American Catholic Biography*. New York: Doubleday, 1984.

Golden, Agnes G. "A Boston Literaray Woman," *The Rosary Magazine*, Vol. 19. Somerset, Ohio: 1901 July-December. p.45-48. (<https://books.google.com/books?id=sjsPAAAAIAAJ>)

"People in Print." *Donohoe's Magazine*. Boston: Donohoe Magazine Company, January 1897.

Ryan, George E. "The Author," *The Pilot*. Boston: 1961 August 5.

"Hold Funeral of Catholic Writer," *The Pilot*. Boston: 1927 January 8.

Scope and Contents note

This collection documents the literary and personal life of author Katherine E. Conway. Materials include diaries; drafts of her poetry and journalism; photographs; and scrapbooks.

Arrangement note

Arranged into five series. I: Diaries; II: Photographs and small paintings; III: Scrapbooks; IV: Poetry and commonplace books; V: Manuscripts and articles.

Collection Inventory

Series I: Diaries, 1907-1926

Scope and Contents note

Conway recorded daily activities and thoughts in her diaries. She wrote often of work related issues, weather, and visits from friends.

Arrangement note

Chronological.

1907	Box 6	Volume 2
1908	Box 6	Volume 1
1909	Box 6	Volume 3
1910	Box 5	Volume 1
1911	Box 6	Volume 4
1912	Box 5	Volume 2
1913	Box 5	Volume 3
1914	Box 5	Volume 4
1915	Box 6	Volume 5
Clipping from 1915 diary, 1915	Box 1	Folder 22
1916	Box 5	Volume 5
1917	Box 5	Volume 6
1918	Box 5	Volume 7

1919	Box 6	Volume 6
1920	Box 5	Volume 8
1921	Box 5	Volume 9
1922	Box 6	Volume 7
1923	Box 5	Volume 10
1924	Box 5	Volume 11
1925	Box 6	Volume 8
1926	Box 6	Volume 9

Series II: Photographs and small paintings, 1878-1885, undated

Scope and Contents note

The bulk of Conway's photographs are in the carte de visite format. While some may be personal, cartes de visite were a popular souvenir purchase in her era. The portraits and the landscape paintings from Argentina are from Katherine E. Conway's sister, Mary Conway.

Arrangement note

Alphabetical.

Church figures, undated	Box 2	Folder 1
Civil War figures, undated	Box 2	Folder 2
John Boyle O'Reilly and Margaret E. Jordan, undated	Box 2	Folder 3
Landscapes of the Wathens Glen viaduct, 1885	Box 2	Folder 4
Literary and historical figures, undated	Box 2	Folder 5
Paintings of Argentina, undated	Box 3	Folder 1-2

Portugal, South America, Africa, circa 1877-1878	Box 2	Folder 6
Unidentified portraits, undated	Box 2	Folder 7

Series III: Scrapbooks, 1874-1898

Scope and Contents note

Scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings by or about Katherine Conway. Many highlight Conway's achievements as one of Boston's first female journalists.

Arrangement note

Chronological.

1874	Box 4	
Loose notes found in 1874 scrapbook, 1874	Box 4	Folder 1
1889-1898	Box 4	
Loose articles found in 1889-1898 scrapbook, 1889-1898	Box 4	Folder 2
Late 1800s	Box 4	
Loose articles found in late 1800s scrapbook	Box 4	Folder 3

Series IV: Poetry and commonplace books, 1881-1892

Arrangement note

Chronological.

Poetry notebook, 1881	Box 6	Volume 10
Newspaper articles and notes found in 1881 poetry notebook, 1881	Box 1	Folder 19

Commonplace Book, 1885	Box 6	Volume 11
Newspaper articles found in 1885 Commonplace Book, 1885	Box 1	Folder 20
Commonplace Book, 1888	Box 6	Volume 12
Correspondence, poetry and newspaper articles found in 1888 commonplace book, 1888	Box 1	Folder 21
Notebook/scrapbook, 1891-1892	Box 6	Volume 13
Poetry notebook, undated	Box 1	Folder 24
Poems and articles found in poetry notebook, undated	Box 1	Folder 23

Series V: Manuscripts and articles, 1889-1964, undated

Arrangement note

Alphabetical.

"The blessed among women", undated	Box 1	Folder 1
"Continuation of vital problems", undated	Box 1	Folder 2
Conway biographical, 1961-1964	Box 1	Folder 3
"The cultured woman and her political duty", undated	Box 1	Folder 4
"Labor and capitalism in literature", undated	Box 1	Folder 5
"The life of Christ", undated	Box 1	Folder 6
"Maurice Frances Eagan: A friend's reminiscence", undated	Box 1	Folder 7
Memorial meeting program of the John Boyle O'Reilly Club (includes letter to Denis A. McCarthy), 1910 August 10	Box 1	Folder 8

New England Woman's Press Association, 1902	Box 1	Folder 9
"Non-Catholics and St. Francis of Assisi", undated	Box 1	Folder 10
"Personal reminiscences of a typical Latter Day Boston man", undated	Box 1	Folder 11
"Reaction begins - The Fitzgeralds go abroad", undated	Box 1	Folder 12
"Scripture in public worship and literature", undated	Box 1	Folder 13
"Some Christian Ideals", 1889	Box 1	Folder 14
"A talk on Christmas books", undated	Box 1	Folder 15
Untitled article (re: Reading Circle movement), undated	Box 1	Folder 16
Untitled Article (re: Scopes trial and evolution), undated	Box 1	Folder 17
"Vital problems in modern literature", circa 1924	Box 1	Folder 18