

Irene Melgaard Hauser Collection

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Summary Information

Repository	James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library
Creator - Author	Hauser, Irene M., (Irene Melgaard Hauser), 1896-1990
Title	Irene Melgaard Hauser Collection
Date	1938-1943
Extent	0.21 Linear feet
Language	English

Biography

Irene Melgaard Hauser was born in Argyle, Minnesota in 1896. She died February 17, 1990. She was an English major at Carleton College and graduated magna cum laude in 1918. She was the first female editor of the student newspaper, the Carletonian.

Hauser received her graduate degree from the Los Angeles Library School, now University of Southern California.

Irene Melgaard married Walter U. Hauser in 1925. They had met in 1918 and corresponded while Irene was in California. Irene's father had a long illness that delayed their marriage until 1925. Walter Hauser was a lawyer and community leader.

Irene worked for the Minneapolis Public Library from 1920 to the birth of her first child, Susan in 1926. Hauser worked in the reference and catalog departments. By 1932 the family finances were in such dire straits because of the Depression that Irene returned to the library.

In 1938 Irene Hauser went to work for the Works Progress Administration. The specific project was to catalog the entire *Minneapolis Journal* from 1858 to 1939. Gratia Countryman, former director of the Minneapolis Public Library supervised the project. Irene Hauser, Countryman's friend and protege, was her assistant on the project. It was one of the most interesting times of Hauser's life. The workers were unemployed stockbrokers, teachers, lawyers and artists. The Hausers invited members of the WPA project without families to their dinner table for holidays. Hauser worked on the project until 1942.

After the WPA project, Hauser continued her library work as a volunteer for Plymouth Congregational Church. She brought together the book collection in one space and cataloged it. The library was later a significant part of the church.

This collection is from Hauser's work with the Minneapolis Newspaper Indexing Project and the Minneapolis Public Library, Work Projects Administration Project No. 6681. The indexing done through this project (and a later one based on the standards and procedures as the manual prescribed) has been an invaluable resource for researchers of the history of Minneapolis, its residents, companies and events. This indexing project of the *Minneapolis Journal* covers 1899 to 1914. In 1942 WPA staff switched over to indexing the Star Journal during the World War II years. The index remains in card format.

Description of the Collection

One Box. Types of materials: booklets, notes, clippings, other materials. *Minneapolis Newspaper Indexing Project: Manual of Instruction* compiled by Irene M. Hauser and Robert A. Elftman. Form of the index is 3 x 5 standard catalog cards filed by subject, brief description of article, length of article, etc. Indexes

political news, editorials, sports, crimes, accidents, obituaries, labor activities, churches, farmer's institutes, personal etc of any town in the state as these appear in the newspaper columns. It will also index advertisements. Advertisements are a record of social and business progress.

Brochure: *Minneapolis Newspaper Indexing and Microfilming Project, Work Projects Administration Project No. 6681 sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Library Scope of project 1878 to 1939.*

Also included is research on the WPA project by Hauser's daughter, Jane Pejsa. A 1943 report on the indexing project is also in the files.

The newsletter of the WPA indexing staff, *Indexer*, is included in this collection.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library

Donor

These papers were donated by Irene Hauser's daughter, Jane Pejsa.

Related Materials

Related Materials

The Minneapolis Journal Index is housed in the 4th floor stacks of Central Library.

The World War II index is in the card catalog in Special Collections.

Additional information on Irene Hauser and her husband Walter is available in the Minneapolis Collection biography files.

The Minneapolis Public Library administrative archives contains further information on the WPA indexing project.

Besides the contents of folder 3, more information on Gratia Countryman is available in her own manuscript collection, **M/A 1997.01.01-04.**

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Minneapolis Public Library.
- Minnesota Works Progress Administration.

Personal Name(s)

- Countryman, Gratia A. (Gratia Alta), 1866-1953

Subject(s)

- Indexers
- Newspapers -- Indexes.
- Public service employment -- Minnesota.
- Unemployed -- Minnesota.

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Minnesota WPA Newspaper Indexing Project Report January 27, 1943	1	1
Twin Cities Library Treasures List (A WPA Project in Twin Cities)	1	2
Photocopy of photo of files, newspaper clipping, notes and letters to Wellington Countryman from his mother Gratia 1939-1941	1	3
Newsletter of the WPA indexing project: <i>Indexer</i> 1939	1	4
Bibliography on MN Indexing Project	1	5
Articles on WPA from <i>Minnesota History</i> , Summer 1971	1	6
<i>Minneapolis Newspaper Indexing and Microfilming Project, Work Projects Administration Project No. 6681</i>	1	7
<i>Minneapolis Newspaper Indexing Project: Manual of Instruction</i> 1939	1	8