

**Everett Literary Society (Chicago, Ill.) records, ca. 1872-1922.**

Descriptive Inventory for the Collection at Chicago History Museum, Research Center

Please address questions to:

Chicago History Museum, Research Center

1601 North Clark Street

Chicago, IL 60614-6038

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**Title:** Everett Literary Society records [manuscript], ca. 1872-1922.

**Main entry:** Everett Literary Society (Chicago, Ill.)

**Inclusive dates:** 1872-1922

**Size:**

0.75 linear ft. (6 v.)

**Access:** This collection is open for research use.

**Provenance statement:** Most of the collection was a gift of G. S. Ellithorpe (1930.0140). One volume was a gift of B. H. McFadden.

**Terms governing use:** Copyright may be retained by the creators of items, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law, unless otherwise noted.

**Please cite this collection as:** Everett Literary Society records (Chicago History Museum) plus a detailed description, date, and box/folder number of a specific item.

**This descriptive inventory contains the following sections:**

Biographical/Historical note,

Summary description of the collection,

Description of some material related to the collection,

List of online catalog headings about the collection,

List of contents of the collection.

**Biographical/Historical note:**

The Everett Literary Society was organized as the Union Park Amateur Debating Society by seven boys from 15 to 18 years of age in February 1872. They met in private homes, but as the membership grew to 25 participants in 1873, they needed a larger meeting place and were given the use of rooms at the Union Park Congregational Church. The name of the society was changed to the Union Park Literary Society, then to the Everett Literary Society in 1873, and for four or five years the society flourished. More than 100 names are listed on the rolls over the years, among them many later well known in Chicago, including Charles R. Crane, Norman D. Fraser, Edwin Lobdell, Martin Ryerson.

**Summary description of the collection:**

Records in 5 volumes and a scrapbook of the club composed of boys and young men, including treasurers' records with list of members, Feb. 1872-April 1877; minutes of meetings, weekly except in summer, including reports on the club's constitution, election of officers, place of

meeting; on the appointment of critics, debaters, orators, and essayists; on the subjects chosen for debate, and notation whether debate was previously assigned or extemporaneous. Debate topics often related to Chicago civic issues. The scrapbook includes programs of the annual banquets and elaborate reunion programs (the latest in 1922) and menus (an especially sumptuous one for a banquet at the Sherman House in 1886); form letters relating to the "Sumner" and to the military service in World War I of relatives of Sumner members. Also present are 2 issues of a boy's magazine, "Little Men," Sept. and Oct. 1871, edited and published by two members of the society, W. D. Gregory and C. N. Bishop. One issue discusses amateur journalism in Chicago, both list recent musical publications (including some by Root and Cady, and Lyon and Healy). The relationship of the Everett to the Sumner Literary Society is unclear.

**Description of some material related to the collection:**

Related materials at Chicago History Museum, Research Center, include the Everett Literary Society photograph album (1930.0140). The Chronicles (publication of The Sumner Literary Society) are available in the library and in The Sumner Literary Society records, ca. 1875-1909.

**List of online catalog headings about the collection:**

The following headings about this collection were placed in the online catalog.

Subjects:

Everett Literary Society (Chicago, Ill.)--Archives.

Union Park Amateur Debating Society (Chicago, Ill.)

Bishop, C. N.

Gregory, W. D.

Little men.

Authors, American--Illinois--Chicago--19th century.

Authors, American--Illinois--Chicago--20th century.

Debates and debating--Illinois--Chicago--Societies, etc.--19th century.

Debates and debating--Illinois--Chicago--Societies, etc.--20th century.

High school students--Illinois--Chicago--19th century.

High school students--Illinois--Chicago--20th century.

Literature--Illinois--Chicago--Societies, etc.

Teenage boys--Illinois--Chicago--Societies and clubs.

World War, 1914-1918--Illinois--Chicago.

Chicago (Ill.)--Intellectual life.

Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions--19th century.

Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions--20th century.

Near West Side (Chicago, Ill.)

Form/genre:

Membership lists.

Minutes.

Periodicals.

Scrapbooks.

Added entries:

Union Park Amateur Debating Society (Chicago, Ill.)

Union Park Congregational Church (Chicago, Ill.)

Little men.

United States--Illinois--Cook County--Chicago.

**List of contents of the collection:**

vol. 1

Treasurer's reports, Feb. 1872-April 1877, listing the names of the treasurers of the society, initiation dues paid, fines and term dues paid or owing, assessments, expenses, and accounts of individual members; also the names of honorary members.

vol. 2-5

Minutes of meetings, weekly except in summer, kept by the secretaries of the society. The constitution, its adoption and amendment, election of officers, place of meeting, are recorded; the appointment of critics, debaters, orators and essayists; the subjects chosen for debate; notation whether debate was previously assigned or extemporaneous. The city of Chicago figures prominently as a subject of discussion, for instance: "Resolved: that the city and that the railroads should build viaducts over the streets of Chicago", "that the action of Mayor Medill in regard to the police commissioners should meet the approval of the people."

vol. 6

The scrapbook contains many miscellaneous items of interest. There are programs of the annual banquets listing topics for speeches and toasts given, 1873-1877. There are elaborate reunion programs, the latest 1922, and menus, an especially sumptuous one of a banquet at the Sherman House in 1886. There are 2 issues of a boy's magazine, "Little Men," Sept. and Oct. 1871, edited and published by two members of the society, W. D. Gregory and C. N. Bishop. One issue discusses amateur journalism in Chicago, both issues list recent musical publications (Root and Cady, and Lyon and Healy). Also in the scrapbook are form letters relating to the "Sumner," and to the military service in World War I of relatives of Sumner members.