GUIDE TO THE
MICROFILM EDITION OF

THE PAPERS OF
ANNA GARLIN SPENCER
[1830-1870], 1878-1931

A Microfilm Publication by

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Note to Researcher

Researchers citing materials in this edition of the *Papers of Anna Garlin Spencer* [1830-1870], 1878-1931 should use the following format:

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**Document Group:** DG 034

**Provenance:** Donated by Dr. Valeria H. Parker [literary executor], 1939

**Size:** 3.75 linear feet

**Microfilm:** 5 reels

**Restrictions:** None
Introduction

History

Anna Carpenter Garlin Spencer (1851-1931) was a minister, feminist, educator, pacifist, and writer on ethics and social problems. Perhaps inspired by the examples of her abolitionist mother, Nancy Carpenter Garlin, and her aunt, Sarah Carpenter, a missionary who worked with homeless women, Spencer dedicated her life to social reform. She was the first woman minister in Rhode Island, serving in Providence from 1819 to 1902 at the Bell Street Chapel, a liberal, non-denominational ethical church.

Anna Garlin was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts, in 1851 and spent her youth in that state and in Rhode Island. In 1869 she began writing for the Providence Journal, as well as teaching in the public schools. She remained a journalist until 1878 when she married the Rev. William H. Spencer, a Unitarian minister. From 1902 until her death, Spencer held a series of teaching posts at such institutions as the University of Wisconsin, the University of Chicago, and Teacher’s College at Columbia University. She taught on issues of religion, marriage and family, the role of women, sexuality, and philanthropy.

Spencer was active in the cause of women’s rights for more than forty years. She was a friend of well-known feminists, including Susan B. Anthony, Ednah Cheney, Lucy Stone, and Valeria H. Parker. In the 1890s she served as president of the Rhode Island Equal Suffrage Association. An early participant in the National Council of Women, Spencer was also president of that organization in 1920.

Her interest in pacifism led Spencer to prominent positions in the cause for peace. She was on the Executive Committee of the National Peace and Arbitration Congress in 1907 and was a founding member of the Woman’s Peace Party in 1915, serving as vice chairman. In 1919 she also became the first chairman of the national board of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

Spencer died at her home in New York in 1931.

Arrangement

The Anna Garlin Spencer Papers include correspondence and writings, as well as biographical and family material. Spencer’s correspondence with well-known women’s rights activists and peace workers is found in Box 1, and her writings are located in Boxes 2-4, including manuscripts, typescripts, and printed articles. Box 5 contains newspaper clippings about Spencer and her work. Material about her years at the Bell Street Chapel are in Box 5. Biographical papers on Spencer are included in Box 6, and Box 9 contains material about William H. Spencer.

Family genealogies, correspondence, and material about Carpenter and Garlin family members are located in Box 7. Miscellaneous material, as well as undated writings and correspondence by Anna Garlin Spencer, are found in Box 8.

The only material not microfilmed is the collection of newspaper clippings in Box 5 and material received by the Swarthmore College Peace Collection after filming was completed.

For further information about the documents and material in this collection that were not microfilmed, please contact the staff of the Swarthmore College Peace Collection at 610-328-8557.
Scope and Content


Material about Anna Garlin Spencer also may be found in the following collections: Hannah Clothier Hull; National Council for Prevention of War; National Council of Women of the United States; New York Peace Society; Woman’s Peace Party; Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, U.S. Section; and Women’s Peace Union.
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Reel 4
Folder 6 Promotional publicity, 1872-1915
Folder 7 Promotional publicity, 1916-, n.d.

[Folders 1-9 not filmed]
Folder 10 Bell Street Chapel material (including correspondence)
Folder 11 Bell Street Chapel, services

Box 6 Biographical Material
Folder 1 Biographical lists
Folder 2 Lists of books, articles, lectures
Folder 3 Admission and membership cards, passport, etc.
Folder 4 75th birthday celebration, 1926
Folder 5 Memorials
Folder 6 Photographs
Folder 7 Miscellaneous material

Box 7 Family Material
Folder 1 Carpenter correspondence, 1830-1900
Folder 2 Carpenter family clippings and miscellaneous
Folder 3 Nancy M. Carpenter: Good Behavior Slips
Folder 4 Carpenter genealogical material
Folder 5 Garlin Correspondence, 1884-n.d.
Folder 6 Garlin correspondence (Lucy Hale Garlin, 1854-1926)
Folder 7 Lucy Hale Garlin, clippings and programs (1863-n.d.)
Folder 8 Garlin genealogical material
# The Papers of Anna Garlin Spencer [1830-1870], 1878-1931
## Reel Contents

### Reel 5
- Folder 9  Spencer correspondence, 1839-1847
- Folder 10  Spencer family clippings and miscellaneous
- Folder 11  Spencer genealogical material

### Box 8  Family Material
- Folder 1  Duplicate material (1)
- Folder 2  Duplicate material (2)
- Folder 3  Incomplete material
- Folder 4  Material, n.d.
- Folder 5  Non-Anna G. Spencer correspondence
- Folder 6  Non-Anna G. Spencer clippings, articles and poetry
- Folder 7  Susan B. Anthony letter to Anna Howard Shaw

### Box 9  William H. Spencer
- Folder 1  Correspondence, 1869-1917, and n.d.
- Folder 2  Diary
- Folder 3  Printed articles by and about William H. Spencer
- Folder 4  Clippings, 1873-1916, incomplete and n.d.
- Folder 5  Miscellaneous material