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Preface

A Woman’s Right, part one, was an exhibition developed by the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina, Columbia campus. Guest curated by Director, SC Collaborative for Race and Reconciliation Dr. Jennifer Gunter and Honors College student Hannah Magraw, the exhibition was cut short because the University of South Carolina closed on March 16, 2020, as a precaution to protect faculty, staff, and students from the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19.

This catalog cannot offer the same experience as seeing the exhibition in person, but it will serve as a record and a resource for those who wish to access it during the University’s closure.

Part two of A Woman’s Right will open in the fall of 2020, either physically at the McKissick Museum, or virtually, or both. We invite you to study this document and we hope you will look forward to participating in programmatic offerings for the second part, focusing on the time period of 1945 to the present, to learn more about the history of women at the University of South Carolina.

Dr. Lana A. Burgess
Faculty Curator, McKissick Museum
Project Manager, A Woman’s Right
College of Arts and Sciences
Introduction

The history of women at the University of South Carolina is a complicated story filled with trials and triumphs that make a simple narrative impossible. This two-part exhibition shows how women on campus fought for basic rights and, once those were achieved, strove for equality in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in the workplace.

The first part, on exhibition from January 11 to May 17, 2020, covers the creation of South Carolina College (1801) to the end of World War II (1945). During this period, women fought for, among other things, the right to enroll as students and the right to vote.

The second part explores 1945 to the present. Women worked to create a university environment that met their needs. On campus, they vigorously campaigned for admission into majors typically considered “male,” equality in housing and athletics, and increased respect for their intelligence and capabilities. Today, women bring an incredible diversity of interests, activities, and achievements to UofSC. This exhibition celebrates the women of UofSC’s past, present, and future.
Timeline

1801- South Carolina College (later to become the University of South Carolina) is founded.

1874- The State Normal School opens in Rutledge Chapel and classes begin.

1895- Frances Guignard Gibbes is the first woman to enroll in the college.

1898- Mattie Jean Adams is the first woman to graduate from the college.

1903- Jaqueline Segar Epes is the first woman to graduate from the college with a master's degree.

1918- Claudia James Sullivan is the first woman to graduate from the University of South Carolina Law School.

1920- The 19th Amendment is ratified, giving women the right to vote.

1923- The Equal Rights Amendment is introduced.

1924- The first dormitory for female students, Wade Hampton College, is built on campus. The first dean of women and female faculty member, Dr. Irene Dillard, is appointed.

1925- Katherine B. Hayward, the first female department head, is appointed, overseeing the Department of Fine Arts.

1926- Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest academic honor society in the country, charts a UofSC chapter.

1928- Alpha Delta Pi is chartered and becomes USC's first national sorority.

1941- USC chooses its first homecoming queen, Mary King.

1942- The nation's first Red Cross Nurse's Aide course is established at USC.
Enslaved Women

Very few, if any, artifacts exist belonging to the enslaved women owned by individuals or hired by South Carolina College. Consequently, period specific objects, such as this dress, serve as a surrogate or stand-in for what is missing. This is the type of dress an enslaved servant would have worn.

Dress, 1842
Cotton
Gift of O. Holt Allen
6.849

Enslaved women owned by faculty and staff or leased from their owners by the college were among the earliest female inhabitants on the Horseshoe. What is known about them comes from documents written by those who enslaved them. Thus, these perspectives cannot accurately represent what enslaved women thought and felt.

View of South Carolina College, 1820.
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

The Horseshoe was built by enslaved men. Enslaved men and women worked in these buildings.
Most details are unknown, but faculty writings provide some insight. The journals and letters of professor Francis Lieber tell us about Betsy and her daughter Elsa, both bought by Lieber in 1836. He was drawn to their “good looks” and “healthy, cheerful, and bright appearance.” According to his journal, Elsa, who was believed to be impregnated by a student, died in 1841 as a result of a miscarriage. Lieber wrote of Betsy’s grief and bemoaned the loss of Elsa as his property.

James Thornwell brought Amanda and others to campus when he became faculty. He believed slavery was a Christian institution and instructed those he enslaved in biblical matters. In 1849, Amanda was found to be “more than usually satisfactory [concerning] the grounds of her faith and hope,” and the board of examiners “directed that she be publicly baptized...on [the] Sabbath.”

Although enslaved men built the wall around the historic Horseshoe, this brick is included here because it contains the fingerprints of the unknown individual who made it. Through extensive research some enslaved workers’ names are known, but few were listed in the historical record.
Wives and daughters of professors lived in almost every building on the Horseshoe from 1805 to 1945, when the university stopped providing on-campus faculty housing.

In 1835, faculty wife Matilda Lieber arrived with her husband and son. English-born, she struggled with the Southern convention of slavery, originally hiring German help. The day he bought a mother and daughter, Mr. Lieber recalled, “Though absolutely convinced that we did right under the given circumstances, [Matilda] had a very severe headache Friday night; she was very much moved by the matter.”

Louisa Preston, wife of the college’s fifth president, was heralded as a society queen. Recounting his American travels, author Baron von Raumer remembered lively discussions at the Prestons’ and Louisa showing off her pet peacock. On campus, “her benignity and kindness conciliated the respect and gratitude of the students.”

Emma Leconte, daughter of professor Joseph Leconte, wrote about campus life before and during the Civil War, where “the disabled, limping soldier has grown to be as familiar as was formerly the festive student in these classic grounds.” Lilla McCutcheon, granddaughter of George McCutcheon who from 1915-1945 lived in what is now McCutcheon House, still reminisces about summer visits to campus.
State Normal School

The Civil War brought sweeping changes to South Carolina College. Many buildings on campus were used for a Confederate hospital, and people displaced by the war inhabited almost all others. The beginning of Reconstruction returned the buildings to scholarly use. The state legislature racially integrated the college and created the South Carolina State Normal School in 1873. Its purpose was to prepare young women to be teachers of African American children who were entitled to an education under the new state constitution which was ratified in 1868.

During its short existence, the State Normal School rented Rutledge Chapel from the college and opened with seventeen students, all African American, in 1874. One of the eight women to graduate from the final class in 1877 was Celia Emma (Dial) Saxon. After graduating, Saxon embarked on a fifty-five-year teaching career. As recognition of her service, a Columbia elementary school on Blossom Street was renamed in her honor in 1930. Now, at the Strom Thurman Fitness Center, a historical marker commemorates where the school stood.
Research uncovered only two names of female instructors before 1920: Laura K. Perry and A.E. Bonham. Both worked for the normal school, which instructed young women how to be teachers.

Female student population growth led to the hiring of the first Dean of Women and first female faculty member, Dr. Irene Dillard, in 1924. A Gamecock article celebrated that “the new dean is a charming and enthusiastic woman who has already endeared herself to the hearts of the girls, and with her to back them, the co-eds will surely be stepping out.”

Katherine Heyward became the first female department head, overseeing the newly created Department of Fine Arts from 1925-1945. Heyward was so highly regarded by students that in 1940 they formed The Katherine Heyward Society, a collegiate organization dedicated to producing and exhibiting art.

In 1943, Sarah Leverette became the third woman to receive a Juris Doctorate degree from the USC School of Law, and in 1947, she became the first female faculty member there, teaching legal writing and heading the law library for 25 years. Jean Toal, a former chief justice of the S.C. Supreme Court, recounted, “I tell her, ‘I want to grow up to be just like you.’”

Miss Irene Dillard, 1928
Garnet and Black Yearbook
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

Photograph of Miss Katherine Heyward, 1936
Garnet and Black Yearbook
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
For almost 100 years, women could not enroll in South Carolina College. African American women could study at Benedict College. White women could attend all-female colleges, such as Chicora and Columbia College. Yet, desiring wider subject offerings and opportunities, many women pushed for admission to the state university.

In 1893, the South Carolina Legislature signed an act that required the college to admit females. The first, Frances Guignard Gibbes, arrived on campus two years later. Gibbes took several classes before leaving to become a successful poet and playwright. Her most well-known play, The Face, was produced in some Southern states and New York. Mattie Adams became the first female graduate in 1898, receiving a Bachelor of Arts.

After the turn of the 20th century, women became a common sight on campus, in classrooms, and in dorms. Claudia Sullivan approached administrators about enrolling in the Law School in 1917 but was denied. In response, she then lobbied the State House to create legislation allowing women to practice law. In 1918, Sullivan became the first woman to graduate from the University of South Carolina’s School of Law School. By the 1920s, females made up a quarter of the university’s enrollment.
At the turn of the 20th century, students deliberated what they considered pros and cons of women voting, an ongoing national conversation. The Euphradian Society, one of the university’s two male literary societies, debated the matter several times beginning in 1912. Two years later, the discussion continued as female students formed a Women’s Suffrage Club to advocate for their right to vote. There was also male support. For example, Professor Lewis Chamberlayne expressed his views before the Richland County Court in 1914. He argued that in every state where women could vote, progressive ideals were passed, including child labor and minimum wage laws.

In June 1919, Congress passed a universal suffrage amendment which then needed ratification by three-fourths of the states. South Carolina voted to reject it. However, on August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified and added to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing all the right to vote. Students continued discussing the issue at the 1931 Y.W.C.A. board retreat and in the literary societies. In a 1936 address on the issue to the Clariosophic Society, former Governor Cole Elease said, “Womanhood has declined in the eyes of the nation as a result.” It was not until 1969 that South Carolina officially ratified the amendment.
Co-Ed Life

When women began enrolling at the South Carolina College, they were referred to as “co-eds,” as the school was now a co-educational institution serving both genders. No more than 25 females attended per year between 1895 and 1914. Though few, the co-eds braved the barriers of matriculating despite no female faculty to support them and no dedicated on-campus housing. The sentiments expressed by several faculty and students alike only made it worse, as if women were invading their hallowed halls.

Enrollments increased to 85 by 1922, yet their only dedicated meeting space, known as the “Girls’ Room,” was in basement of the president’s house. Frustrated with this situation, co-eds successfully lobbied the state legislature to increase funding for meeting spaces and on-campus housing. In 1924, the doors of Wade Hampton, the first all-female dormitory, opened.

In 1926, the university chartered the state’s first chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest academic honor society in the United States. Among the first initiates that year was Miriam Greever, president of the Hypatian Literary Society, whose goal was to institute intercollegiate debates.

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1899
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
Women were involved in a variety of extracurricular activities as part of the campus community. In some instances, they joined groups that male students had established before women were admitted in 1893. Although women were allowed only to be honorary members of the Glee Club in 1899, the following year they were inducted as full members.

In other cases, when denied entry into existing organizations, female students created their own. For example, one club was the Co-Ed Club of 1899, which included all 18 female students as members. With the motto “the woman is the better man,” the club strove to protect women’s interests.

The Hypatian Society, on campus from 1915 to the 1970s, was a literary society modeled on the two established male clubs, the Clariosophic and Euphradian Societies. In 1924, the Euphrosyean Society formed to complement and compete with the Hypatian. Literary societies functioned in place of fraternities and sororities, which were not allowed until the 1920s. Alpha Delta Pi became the university’s first national sorority in 1928.

In 1908, before starting their own athletic teams, women briefly joined the previously all-male tennis team. While women were not permitted to play on the football, basketball, or baseball teams, they could become sponsors. They could also showcase their athletic skills by playing intramural sports like basketball and field hockey.
Beauty pageants were another way that women participated in campus life. The first Easter Queen, Kate Thompson, was elected in 1913 in a contested vote that had students writing editorials to the Gamecock newspaper.

Easter Week was a celebration that would later become May Day with a May Queen sponsored by Kappa Sigma Kappa. The event included pageants and dancing around a maypole, a tall wooden pole that celebrants wove around with colorful streamers.

Miss Kate Graham Thomson
Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1913
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

Miss Catherrine Cantwell
Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1931
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1934
Courtesy of University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
World Wars I and II

World Wars impacted all those who worked and studied at the University of South Carolina. Both times transformed campus into a military training site. When the U.S. entered World War I, young men and women from across the state enlisted, eager to serve. In all, 143 South Carolina women served in non-combat roles as nurses and ambulance drivers.

World War II also saw male students enlisted in the armed forces, and a USC Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program was established in 1940. In 1942, the University created the nation’s first Red Cross Nurses’ Aide course, offering female students a way to support the war effort. In 1944, “We installed South Carolina’s first college Red Cross chapter – and to prove its worth, the co-eds gave countless hours of service.”

Female students also volunteered with the United Service Organizations (USO), wrote letters, and knitted socks. A 1942 article in The Gamecock detailed how women’s dorms were full of photographs of loved ones in uniform. Embracing wartime opportunities, female students’ work was valued: “Carolina’s co-eds blossomed forth, not merely as decorative ornaments of beauty, but as able executives and hard workers. This was a recognition which was new to Carolina.”

Student Jeanne Goldsmith wrote daily in her diary about significant events. These two entries give insight into a female student’s life as she describes her dating activities, communications with her parents, and events of national importance, which in this case was the United States’ commemoration of Victory over Japan Day, ending World War II.
Acknowledgements

This exhibition would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the following individuals.
The staff of McKissick Museum would like to thank:

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Graham Duncan, Head of Collections and Curator of Manuscripts, South Caroliniana Library

Elizabeth West, University Archivist, South Caroliniana Library

Elizabeth Sudduth, Irvin Rare Books and Special Collections, Hollings Special Collections Library
### Enslaved Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Material/Detail</th>
<th>Catalog Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dress, 1842</td>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Gift of O. Holt Allen 6.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slave Badge, 1836</td>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>5.379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Fragments, 1856</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>2010.21.01 and 2010.21.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph of Slave Quarters behind President's House, 1940s</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>2015.39.01</td>
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### Wives and Daughters

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<th>Item Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lieber Signet Stamp, circa 1835</td>
<td>Metal alloy stamp with wooden handle</td>
<td>5.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream Pitcher, 1850</td>
<td>Glaze and Radcliffe Silver</td>
<td>5.1563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait of Ellen Connelly Cooper Hanna, 1860</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Gift of Rufus G. Fellers 2015.16.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait of Matilda O. Lieber, 1830</td>
<td>William Bradley Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Laurence and Natalie Humphrey 2009.07.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress, 1910</td>
<td>Linen and lace</td>
<td>Gift of Mrs. Ross Durham 1989.15.16.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mourning Brooch, 1853</td>
<td>Metal, enamel, glass, and hair</td>
<td>Gift of Mary Palmer Mouzon Darby 5.176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spoon, 1845
Silver
Gift of Miss Currell
5.49

Chatelaine, circa 1857
Ivory, mother of pearl, and metal
5.839

State Normal School
Students of the State Normal School, c. 1874
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina

Unidentified students sit in front of Rutledge Chapel with their professor, Mortimer A. Warren.
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina

Interview with Celia Dial Saxon, 1936-37
Lillian Buchannan
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina

Portrait of Clarissa M. Thompson, 1872
Tintype photograph
Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

State Normal School Exam Schedule, 1875
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina

McGuffey’s New Fifth Eclectic Reader, 1885
William Holmes McGuffey
Paper and leather
Irvin Rare Books and Special Collections Library, William Savage Textbook Collection

Female Faculty
Photograph of Miss Irene Dillard, 1928
Garnet and Black Yearbook
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina

Photograph of Miss Katherine Heyward, 1936
Garnet and Black Yearbook
University Archives, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina
Students
Workbook, 1929
Frances Guignard Gibbes
Manuscripts Division,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

Lucy
Frances Guignard Gibbes
Manuscripts Division,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

The Strange Woman
Frances Guignard Gibbes
Manuscripts Division,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

Suffrage
“Votes for Women” Political Button
Ink on paper, metal, plastic
Gift of Charles T. Ferillo
1995.15.65.403

Pamphlet, 1917
Gift of Charles T. Ferillo
1995.15.65.782

Political Button
Ink on paper, metal, plastic
Gift of Eulalie Chafee Salley
5.331

Pamphlet, 1928
Ink on paper
6.705

Co-Ed Life
Postcard of Sims Dormitory for
Women, circa 1940
Ink on paper
Gift of Mark D. Smith
2015.32.03

Photograph of the Interior of Wade
Hampton College, circa 1950
Ink on paper
Gift of Solomon Blatt, Jr., and Brian
Blatt
6.2744

Dinner Plate depicting Sims
College, 1953
Ink on paper, metal, plastic
Gift of Richland Library Friends and
Foundation
2019.03.01

YWCA pin
Metal
6.386
Gift of Anne Carolina Gibert

The Carolina’s Student Handbook, 1930-31
University Archives,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

The Daily Gamecock article, 1940
Ink on paper
Gift of Solomon Blatt, Jr., and Brian
Blatt
6.2744

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1938
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of Richland Library Friends and
Foundation
2019.03.01
Extracurricular Activities

Phi Beta Kappa Key
Gold
Dr. Jennifer Gunter

Alpha Delta Pi Pin
Gold, enamel with aquamarines and diamonds
Anonymous lender

Alpha Delta Pi Lavaliere
Gold
Anonymous lender

Powder Puff Football Game Program, 1945
Ink on paper
Museum Purchase
2013.09.04

Hypatian Society Diploma, 1922
Manuscripts Division,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

Hypatian Society Meeting
Minutes, 1952-55
University Archives,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

Hypatian Society Treasurer’s
Record Books
University Archives,
South Caroliniana Library,
University of South Carolina

Euphradian Society Pin, 1923
Gold
6.214

Euphradian Society Pin, 1926
Gold
5.370

Clariosophic Society Pin, 1806
Gold
5.368

Clariosophic Society Key, 1836
Rose gold
5.732

Clariosophic Society Medal, 1885
Gold
5.1574

World War I and II

“For Home or Country” Poster, 1917
James Lee
Ink on paper
1995.43.XX.01

Sheet Music, 1917
Ink on paper
2016.01.25

“His Country’s Call” Poster, 1917
Ink on paper
1995.43.XX.02

World War One Victory Metal, 1919
Metal and fabric
2017.21.41
“World War Memorial Building”
Postcard, circa 1939
Ink on paper
Gift of Mark D. Smith
2015.32.01

“Share in the Victory” Poster, 1918
Haskell Coffin
Ink on paper
1995.43.XX.07

World War II Medal, 1945
Metal and fabric
2017.21.31

Diary Entries, 1945
Ink on paper
Gift of Leslie Drucker
2013.03.02

Ration Books, 1945
Paper
Gift of Agnes Stone Dawsey
1990.40.37.233B, C, D, and E

Letter, 1963
Ink on paper
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2016.44.06

Red Cross Armband, 1944
Cotton and thread
2001.08.XX.04

Stethoscope, circa 1940
Metal, plastic, and rubber
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2015.21.22

The Principles and Practices of Nursing, 1927
Leather, paper, and ink
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2015.21.24

A Short History of Nursing, 1938
Leather, paper, and ink
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2015.21.25

Materia Medica for Nursing, 1914
Leather, paper, and ink
Gift of Renatta Loquist to USC College of Nursing
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2015.21.103

Red Cross Pin, 1945
Enamel on metal
Gift from Pamela G. Ferguson to USC College of Nursing
Transfer from USC College of Nursing
2016.11.04

Cape, circa 1944
Wool
Gift of Teri Lynn Herbert
2013.18.01
Other Ephemera

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1899
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of William M. Shand
2016.33.09

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1911
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of Harvey W. Shaw, III
2015.35.02

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1921
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of UofSC Development and Alumni Relations
2019.11.04

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1939
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of Richland Library Friends and Foundation
2019.03.02

Garnet and Black Yearbook, 1942
Leather, ink, and paper
Gift of UofSC Development and Alumni Relations
2019.11.07

Four Female Students Posing, circa 1948
Photograph
Gift of Leslie Drucker
2013.03.08d

Two Female Students Sitting on the Horseshoe, circa 1948
Photograph
Gift of Leslie Drucker
2013.03.08e