Finding Aid to the Louise Sorbier Papers, 1854-1956, MS 2031

Finding aid prepared by California Historical Society staff; revised by Tanya Hollis and Marie Dunlap in 2010.

California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
415-357-1848
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2001, 2010
Title: Louise Sorbier papers
Date (inclusive): 1854-1956
Collection Number: MS 2031
Creator: Sorbier, Louise, 1847-1929
Physical Description: 7 boxes, 1 flat box (4.5 Linear feet)
Repository: California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105
415-357-1848
reference@calhist.org
URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/
Physical Location: Collection is stored onsite.
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.
Abstract: Comprises correspondence, organizational records, legal documents, bound volumes, newspaper clippings, and ephemera documenting the personal life and official activities of San Francisco suffragist and civic leader Louise Sorbier. The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence, most of which is addressed to Louise Sorbier. Also contains scattered records of women's and civic improvement organizations in which Sorbier participated, including the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific Coast, California Suffrage Amendment Campaign Association, Arguello Boulevard Improvement Club, and Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association; correspondence addressed to Cecile Sorbier in her role as president of the San Francisco Club; a scrapbook of newspaper clippings about the women's suffrage movement in San Francisco in the 1890s; and newspaper clippings, mainly documenting the women's suffrage and cemetery anti-removal campaigns in San Francisco.
Access
Collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Louise Sorbier Papers, MS 2031. California Historical Society.
Arrangement
Separated Materials
Sorbier family photographs have been transferred to the Photography Collection, shelved in the Portraits Collection.
Biographical Information
Louise Sorbier, née Bacon, was born in 1847 in Paris. She immigrated to San Francisco with her parents as a child. She had three daughters with her husband, Jules Sorbier: Josephine Sorbier (1873-1899), Cecile Sorbier (1875-1952), and Marie Sorbier (1877-1947). She and Jules Sorbier divorced in 1877.
Louise Sorbier was a prominent organizer and member of many women's and civic improvement organizations in San Francisco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She served as president of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, an organization founded in 1891 to provide women with educational opportunities and vocational training. At the same time, she was active in the women's suffrage movement of the 1890s, serving as president of the Eleventh Amendment Club, and treasurer of the Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific Coast, the California State Suffrage Constitutional Amendment Association, and the Women's Suffrage Association. As an officer of these organizations, Sorbier advocated the amendment of the state constitution to guarantee women's suffrage in California.
In the 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s, Louise Sorbier was active in various civic improvement efforts in San Francisco, including and prominently, the cemetery anti-removal movement. She served as director of the Outdoor Art League, president of the Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association, and vice president of the Arguello Boulevard Improvement Club. Her daughter Cecile followed in her footsteps, serving as president of the San Francisco Club and Memorial Museum, Golden Gate, Society.
Gate Park Endowment Committee, beginning around 1916. Louise Sorbier died in 1929.

Scope and Contents
This collection comprises correspondence, organizational records, legal documents, bound volumes, newspaper clippings, and ephemera documenting the personal life and official activities of San Francisco suffragist and civic leader Louise Sorbier. Papers (1854-1956) mainly consist of correspondence addressed to Louise Sorbier. Also included are scattered records of women's and civic organizations in which Louise Sorbier participated, including the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific Coast, California Suffrage Amendment Campaign Association, Arguello Boulevard Improvement Club, and Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association; as well as correspondence addressed to Cecile Sorbier in her role as president of the San Francisco Club; Sorbier family wills; other legal documents; and ephemera. Volumes (1888-1927) include a scrapbook of newspaper clippings documenting the women's suffrage movement and its leaders in San Francisco in the 1890s; the constitution and minutes of the Arguello Boulevard Improvement Club; and five volumes of Women's Educational and Industrial Union records, including three ledgers, a membership book, and the Ladies' Finance Committee address book. Newspaper clippings (1893-1928), taken from various San Francisco newspapers, mainly document the women's suffrage and cemetery anti-removal campaigns in San Francisco, including the activities of the Woman's Congress, California State Suffrage Constitutional Amendment Club, Eleventh Amendment Club, Women's Suffrage Association, and Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association.

Index
This index is derived from a list of added entries in the legacy finding aid for the Louise Sorbier papers. Names and subject headings are unauthorized. Dates, when available, indicate the dates of the materials in which names or topics are referenced.

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**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

- Sorbier, Cecile Marie, 1875-1952
- Societies--California--San Francisco.
- Women civic leaders--California--San Francisco.
- Women--California--San Francisco.
- Women--Societies and clubs.
- Women--Suffrage.
- Clippings.
- Scrapbooks.

**Acquisition Information**

**Accruals**
No additions are expected.

**Processing Information**
Processed by California Historical Society staff; additions processed by Marie Dunlap in 2010.
Finding Aid to the Louise Sorbier Papers, 1854-1956, MS 2031

**Series 1: Papers 1854-1956**

**Extent:** 5.0 boxes

**Scope and Contents**

Documents the personal lives and civic activities of Louise Sorbier and her daughter Cecile Sorbier. Includes correspondence, mostly addressed to Louise Sorbier; scattered records of women's and civic organizations in which Louise and Cecile Sorbier participated; legal documents; and ephemera.

Papers spanning the years 1854 to 1899 include letters to Louise Sorbier, in English and French, as well as scattered records of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific Coast, and California Suffrage Amendment Campaign Association.

Papers spanning the years 1900 to 1921 include letters to Louise and Cecile Sorbier, as well as scattered records of the Arguello Boulevard Improvement Association and Cemetery Beautification and Anti-Removal Association. The bulk of the correspondence addressed to Cecile Sorbier concerns her work as president of the San Francisco Club and Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park Endowment Committee.

Legal documents include the wills of Louise Sorbier and her daughters, Cecile and Marie Sorbier.

**Box 1, Folder 1**

1854-1889

**Scope and Contents**

Includes the annual report of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, 1888-1889, and the constitution and by-laws of the Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific, 1894.

**Box 1, Folder 2**

1890-1894

**Scope and Contents**

Includes annual reports of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, 1896-1897 and 1897-1898.

**Box 1, Folder 3**

1895

**Scope and Contents**

Includes the annual report of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, 1898-1899, and the constitution and by-laws of the Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific, 1894.

**Box 1, Folder 4**

1896-1897

**Scope and Contents**

Includes annual reports of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, 1896-1897 and 1897-1898.

**Box 1, Folder 4A**

Women's Suffrage Vote 1896

**Box 1, Folder 5**

1898-1899

**Box 1, Folder 6**

1900-1906

**Box 2, Folder 7**

1907-1909

**Box 2, Folder 8**

1910

**Box 2, Folder 9**

1911

**Scope and Contents**

Includes minutes of the Depositors Mutual Aid and No Fee Association of the California Safe Deposit and Trust Company.

**Box 2, Folder 10**

1912 January-June

**Box 2, Folder 11**

1912 July-December

**Box 2, Folder 12**

1913 January-March

**Scope and Contents**

Includes handwritten copy of the constitution of the Cemetery Protective Association and Handbook of the California Legislature.

**Box 3, Folder 13**

1913 April-December

**Box 3, Folder 14**

1914 January-July

**Scope and Contents**

Includes report of the Committee appointed by the Conference of Cemetery Protectors to Interview Mayor Rolph.
Series 1: Papers 1854-1956

| Box 3, Folder 15 | 1914 August-December |
| Box 3, Folder 16 | 1915 January-April |
|                  | Scope and Contents |
|                  | Includes Handbook of the California Legislature. |

| Box 3, Folder 17 | 1915 May-December |
| Box 4, Folder 18 | 1916 |
| Box 4, Folder 19 | 1917 |
|                  | Scope and Contents |
|                  | Includes minutes of the Cemetery Protective Association. |

| Box 4, Folder 20 | 1918-1919 |
| Box 4, Folder 21 | 1920 |
| Box 4, Folder 22 | 1921 |
| Box 5, Folder 23 | 1922-1948 |
| Box 5, Folder 24 | Family wills 1926-1956 |
|                  | Scope and Contents |
|                  | Includes the wills of Christine Breon (1926), Louise Sorbier (1928), Gaston Bacon (1929), and Cecile Sorbier (1949). |

| Box 5, Folder 25-26 | undated |

Series 2: Volumes 1888-1927

| Box 6, Folder 1 | Arguello Boulevard Improvement Club Constitution and Minutes 1909-1927 |
| Box 6, Folder 2 | Calligraphy and French notes undated |
| Box 6, Folder 3 | Address book undated |
| Box 6, Folder 4 | Personal expenses and address book 1874 |

Oversize Box 1

|                      | Scrapbook of newspaper clippings 1893-1897 |
|                      | Scope and Contents |
|                      | Includes a detailed index of women's names found in Louise Sorbier's scrapbook. |
|                      | Processing Information |
|                      | Pages from Louise Sorbier's scrapbook have been removed from their original binding and encapsulated in mylar. |
Subseries 2.1: **Women's Educational and Industrial Union records 1894-1902**

**Extent:** 5.0 volumes

**Box 6, Folder 5**

**Ledgers 1888-1902**

**Extent:** 3.0 volumes

**Scope and Contents**

Ledgers include accounts of classes taught by the Women's Educational and Industrial Union.

**Box 6, Folder 6**

**Membership book 1894-1899**

**Ladies Finance Committee address book undated**

**Series 3: Newspaper Clippings 1893-1928 Bulk, 1898-1921**

**Extent:** 1.0 box

**Scope and Contents**

Taken from the San Francisco Call, Chronicle, Examiner, Monitor, Post, Daily News, Fillmore District News, Mission Enterprise, and other San Francisco newspapers, clippings in this series document the activities of many of the women's suffrage and civic improvement organizations in which Louise Sorbier participated, including and prominently, the Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association.

Newspaper clippings published between 1893 and 1898 primarily concern the women's suffrage movement in San Francisco, including the activities of the Woman's Congress, California State Suffrage Constitutional Amendment Club, Eleventh Amendment Club, and Women's Suffrage Association. Also included are clippings about Susan B. Anthony, Anna Shaw, and P.C. Yorke ("Father Yorke").

Newspaper clippings published between 1912 and 1921 primarily concern cemetery anti-removal efforts in San Francisco, especially the activities of the Cemetery Beautifying and Anti-Removal Association, founded in 1915 with Sorbier as president. Also included are clippings about Mount Saint Joseph's Orphanage (1911), the California Safe Deposit and Trust lawsuit (1912), and the Outdoor Art League (1904-1916).

**Box 7, Folder 1**

1893-1894

**Box 7, Folder 2**

1895-1898

**Box 7, Folder 3**

Outdoor Art League 1904-1916

**Box 7, Folder 4**

1907-1910

**Box 7, Folder 5**

1911

**Box 7, Folder 6**

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**Box 7, Folder 8**

1915-1917

**Box 7, Folder 9**

1918-1920

**Box 7, Folder 10**

1921

**Box 7, Folder 11**

1924-1928

**Box 7, Folder 12**

Undated