Guide to the Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection

Collection number: MSS-2008-10-01

Descriptive Summary

Title: Kate Douglas Wiggin collection
Dates: circa 1880-1915
Collection number: MSS-2008-10-01
Creator: Unknown
Collection Size: 2 boxes3.25 linear feet
Repository: San Jose State University, Library.
San Jose, California 95192-0028
Abstract: Kate Douglas Wiggin was one of the founders of the California Kindergarten Training School in San Francisco and an author of several children's books including the well-known Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm (1903). The Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection consists of sample books of crafts for children that illustrate educational theory and method as taught by Ms. Wiggin and in the San Jose Normal School kindergarten teacher training program. The collection also includes a photograph of Ms. Wiggin that she presented to the San Jose Normal School kindergarten training class of 1915.
Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Biographical History
Kate Douglas Wiggin (1856-1923) was a pioneer of the kindergarten movement in the United States in the nineteenth century. She helped to establish the Silver Street Kindergarten in San Francisco in 1878, the first free kindergarten in California. She also co-founded the California Kindergarten Training School for aspiring kindergarten teachers in 1880. In addition to kindergarten training and advocacy, Wiggin was a prolific author of books for children, including the well-known *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903) and *Mother Carey's Chickens* (1911). Wiggin also published a number of works on kindergarten theory and method as well as fiction for adults.

Wiggin's teaching philosophy was based on the writings of Friedrich Froebel, a German educator who established the concept of kindergarten in the 1830s. Froebel's pedagogy was based on educational play, and he developed educational toys known as "Froebel's Gifts" and activities known as "Froebel's Occupations" based on these principles. In her three-volume work on kindergarten philosophy, *The Republic of Childhood* (1895-96), Wiggin modeled her lessons on Froebel's "Gifts and Occupations". These activities were taught to students at her kindergarten training school and resulted in sample books like those in this collection.

Bibliography


Smith, Mark K. "Fredrich Froebel (Fröbel)." *Encyclopaedia of Informal Education*. http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-froeb.htm

Scope and Content of Collection
The Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection consists of six sample books of crafts for kindergarten children and a signed photograph of Kate Douglas Wiggin. The sample craft books are typical of those created by students of Wiggin's California Kindergarten Training School in the 1880s and include examples of sewing, paper cutting, and weaving. The photograph was given to San Jose State Normal School kindergarten training class in 1915.

Arrangement
This collection is arranged into one series: I. Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection, circa 1880-1915.

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

Kindergarten--History
Kindergarten teachers--Training of
San Jose State Normal School
Wiggin, Kate Douglas Smith, 1856-1923

Related Material
Kate Douglas Wiggin: Notebooks and workbooks, ca. 1883-1884 at the Stanford University Libraries Department of Special Collections and University Archives in Stanford, CA.

Kate Douglas Smith Wiggin Papers in the Clifton Waller Barrett Library, 1887-1923, at the University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA.

Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection, 1867-1985, n.d. (bulk 1891-1917) at the Bowdoin College Library George W. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Brunswick, ME.
Series I: Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection circa 1880-1915

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

The contents in this series include sample books illustrating Friedrich Froebel's "Gifts and Occupations" for kindergarten students and a signed photograph of Kate Douglas Wiggin. The activities illustrated in the sample books were developed by Froebel in Germany during the 1830s and were popular among kindergarten proponents in the United States in the nineteenth century. Froebel created the concept of kindergarten, in which learning is based on play. He described "Gifts", or play materials, and "Occupations", or activities, that were suited to the educational needs of young children. Kate Douglas Wiggin used Froebel's theories of "Gifts and Occupations" in her kindergarten training course at the California Kindergarten Training School in San Francisco, and they were also included in kindergarten instruction at the San Jose Normal School. The San Jose Normal School's Department of Kindergarten Education, established in 1914, taught Froebel's principles through their required courses in Kindergarten Theory, as described in the 1915 Bulletin of the State Normal School at San Jose.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder 1/1-2/7</th>
<th>Kindergarten Craft Samples 1880s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 1/1</td>
<td>Extra craft paper and samples 1880s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 1/2-2/7</td>
<td>Sample books 1880s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2/8</td>
<td>Photograph of Kate Douglas Wiggin 1915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>