Baylor University . The Texas Collection
BU Records: Rufus C. Burleson Society. 1900-1919

Summary Information
Creator
Rufus C. Burleson Society, 1887 - 1925 (Creator)
Extent (quantity/size)
1 document box
Language
English
Abstract
The Rufus C. Burleson Society records document the operations and activities of one of Baylor's literary societies that was most active in the early 1900s.

Subjects
Baptist universities and colleges -- Texas -- Waco -- History. / Baylor University -- History. / Waco (Tex.) -- History. / Women -- Education (Higher) -- Texas -- Waco. / Women -- Texas -- Waco -- Societies and clubs.

Administrative Information
Restrictions on Access and Use
All requests for copying of materials must be submitted to The Texas Collection in writing. Please use the Request Form for Copying Materials sheet. Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is:

BU Records: Rufus C. Burleson Society, Accession BU/149, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

Processing Information
Described by Brian Simmons and released on 2013-06-17.

Scope and Content
BU Records: Rufus C. Burleson Society was transferred from uncataloged holdings in The Texas Collection.

The records of the Rufus C. Burleson Society date from approximately 1900 to 1919. Early records were destroyed in a fire, but in 1901, the organization attempted to recreate the roll, by-laws, and constitution. Items include the society's constitution and by-laws, minutes from meetings, and roll books (from 1909-1913 and 1915-1919). Also included are informational pamphlets, an event program, invitations, and correspondence.

Administrative/Biographical History
The Rufus C. Burleson Society, also known as the "R.C.B.'s", was one of two literary societies open to women at Baylor during the late 1800s and early 1900s. It was the last formed of the four dominant literary societies at Baylor at the time, which included the Philomathesian Literary Society, Erisophian Literary Society, and Calliopean Literary Society. Founded in October 1887 (almost twenty years after the last established literary society, the Calliopean Literary Society), the group faced initial adversity from the previously established societies and named itself after the then current Baylor president who supported the growing group. Their motto, "Step By Step," reflects the nature of the gradual acceptance of the organization.

Literary societies at Baylor reached their height of popularity around 1900 and offered members the opportunity to socialize outside of the academic setting while providing a unique group identity. Activities were primarily concerned with academic development; oratory skills were especially important. Societies encouraged personal development, held meetings, hosted events, and allowed access to private libraries. Joint meetings and debates were popular among the societies and contributed to the rivalry between them. Eventually, the Rufus C. Burleson Society formed an alliance with the Erisophian Literary Society after the Philomathesian Literary Society and Calliopean Literary Society became brother-sister organizations.

As popular interest in debate declined and membership dwindled in the 1920s, the Rufus C. Burleson Society merged with the Erisophian Literary Society, and the group retained the Erisophian name. The group held its last meeting in 1925 and after a brief attempt to revive the society in 1926, ceased to exist.

Related Resources
Related records in other Archive collections
Records BU Records: Philomathesian Literary Society, Inclusive 1859-1951, Bulk 1880-1913
Records BU Records: Erisophian Literary Society, 1853-1928

Related citations
Bell, S. Female College Life at Baylor, 1920-1930. Seminar paper, Baylor University, 1966.

Archival Arrangement
BU Records: Rufus C. Burleson Society was not organized, but there was an inventory.

Currently BU Records: Rufus C. Burleson Society is arranged in three series: I. Correspondence, II. Diaries, Minutes, Proceedings, and III. Literary Productions.

Series 1: Correspondence. 1904

http://baylorarchives.cuadra.com/starweb9/(lcksearch.staff/starweb9/..._action=6252b__formFrame=mastFrame&...websessionID=133720/871/8818 1 / 2
Administrative/Biographical History
This series contains two letters regarding the Rufus C. Burleson Society. This series is in fair condition.

Item List
Box 1. Folder 1. Correspondence, 1904

Series 2: Diaries, Minutes, Proceedings. 1900-1904

Administrative/Biographical History
This series contains a journal of minutes and operational information. The series is in poor condition.

Item List
Box 1. Folder 2. Minutes, 1900-1904

Series 3: Literary Productions. 1901-1919

Administrative/Biographical History
This series includes the constitution and by-laws and event materials of the Rufus C. Burleson Society. The series is in fair condition.

Item List
Box 1. Folder 3. Constitution and By-laws and Event Materials, 1901-1916
Box 1. Folder 4. Roll Book, 1909-1913
Box 1. Folder 5. Roll Book, 1915-1919