

# Henry and Inez Johnson Papers

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## Collection Summary

**Identifier:** MA 32

**Title:** Henry and Inez Johnson Papers

**Dates:** 1924-1998

**Extent:** 4.40

**Creator:** Johnson, Henry M., 1903-1993  
Johnson, Inez O., 1911-1995

**Language:** English

**Repository:** South Dakota State University Archives & Special Collections, University Station, Box 2115, 1300 North Campus Drive, Brookings, South Dakota, 57007

**Access Note:** Open. Materials must be used in-house and do not circulate.

**Preferred Citation:** Title or description of item, date, collection ID, box number, folder number, collection title, South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Brookings, South Dakota.

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## Abstract

The Henry M. and Inez O. Johnson Diaries document more than seven decades of rural life in eastern South Dakota, spanning 1924 to 1998. The collection consists of seventy one handwritten journals maintained primarily by Henry M. Johnson, with contributions from Inez O. Johnson, chronicling daily activities on the Johnson family farm near Baltic, South Dakota. The diaries record agricultural work, livestock care, crop conditions, weather observations, farm management decisions, and the rhythms of planting and harvest that shaped the family's livelihood.

Beyond agricultural operations, the journals provide insight into family life, community relationships, church involvement, and local events in the Baltic area. References to hunting, fishing, social gatherings, health concerns, and regional developments situate the Johnson family within the broader social and economic landscape of twentieth century rural South Dakota. Together, the diaries offer a continuous, firsthand account of farm life across periods of economic hardship, agricultural change, and modernization, making the collection a valuable resource for the study of rural history, family life, and community culture in the northern Great Plains.

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## **Biography**

### **Henry M. Johnson, 1903-1993**

Henry M. Johnson was born on October 5, 1903, to Ole and Beret Johnson on a farm near Baltic, South Dakota. He was baptized at Old Nidaros Lutheran Church, where he remained a lifelong member. An avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed hunting and fishing throughout his life. On March 14, 1931, he married Inez Erickson at East Nidaros Lutheran Church. The couple lived and farmed on Henry's family homestead until retiring and moving into the town of Baltic in 1987. They had four sons: Odel, Ivan, Dean, and Jerome. Henry passed away on June 4, 1993, at the Dell Rapids Community Hospital.

### **Inez O. Johnson, 1911-1995**

Inez O. Erickson Johnson was born on October 31, 1911, in Lake County, South Dakota, to Martin and Julia Erickson. At age eight, she moved with her family to a farm near Baltic. She attended rural school and Baltic Grade School. Inez was baptized at St. Peter Lutheran Church and confirmed at East Nidaros Lutheran Church. She married Henry Johnson on March 14, 1931, and they farmed together until their retirement in 1987. Inez became a resident of Terrace Manor Nursing Home in Dell Rapids on April 28, 1995, and died on May 19, 1995, at Dell Rapids Community Hospital.

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## **Scope and Content**

The collection consists of seventy one handwritten journals maintained by Henry and Inez Johnson that document daily life and agricultural work on their farm near Baltic, South Dakota. The journals record routine farm operations, weather conditions, crop and livestock

management, household activities, and community involvement, providing a sustained account of rural life in eastern South Dakota across much of the twentieth century.

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## **Access Points**

### **Subjects**

- American diaries
- Farm life

### **Names**

- Johnson, Henry M., 1903-1993
- Johnson, Inez O., 1911-1995

### **Places**

- South Dakota--Baltic

### **Genre**

- Diaries
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## Container List

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	Journal	1924-1927
2	1	Journal	1928-1940
3	1	Journal	1941-1950
4	1	Journal	1951-1960
5	1	Journal	1961-1970
6	1	Journal	1971-1980
7	1	Journal	1981-1990
8	1	Journal	1991-1995