

Elmer and Cecile Sexauer Family Papers

Collection Summary

Identifier: MA 6

Title: Elmer and Cecile Sexauer Family Papers

Dates: 1898-1971

Extent: 2.64 linear feet (3 document cases, 1 oversize box)

Creator: Sexauer, Elmer, 1888-1986
Sexauer, Cecile, 1888-1973

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, MA 6, box number, folder number, Elmer and Cecile Sexauer Family Papers, South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Brookings, South Dakota.

Abstract

This collection documents the personal and professional lives of Elmer and Cecile Sexauer, featuring materials such as postcards, diaries, scrapbooks, and family papers. It provides insight into their travels, family history, and involvement in the seed and grain industries.

The collection highlights their contributions to their communities and offers valuable context for understanding early 20th-century American life, including their social networks and experiences.

Biography

Elmer Harrison Sexauer was born on July 13, 1888, in Winona, Minnesota, to George P. and Elisa (Ulrich) Sexauer. The family moved to Volga, South Dakota in 1891 and later to Brookings, where Elmer attended public schools and South Dakota State College. In 1911, he joined his father in managing The Sexauer Company. Elmer served in the U.S. Army during World War I and held leadership roles in several organizations, including president of the SD Seed Dealers Association, the Western Seedsmen Association, the American Seed Trade Association, and the National Grain and Feed Association. He was also involved with the Board of Directors of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, First Bank Systems, and Northwestern Bell Telephone. Elmer received the Distinguished Service Award from the University of South Dakota for his business achievements. He was a member of Gamma Sigma Phi at SDSU, the Brookings Masonic Lodge No. 24, and the El Riad Shrine. Elmer retired in 1977 as chairman of The Sexauer Company, which had offices in Brookings, Des Moines, West Fargo, and Norfolk. He passed away on November 15, 1986.

Cecile Irene Welch Sexauer was born on January 18, 1888, in Huron, South Dakota, to Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Welch. The family moved to Arlington, South Dakota, and later to Brookings in 1903. Cecile graduated from Brookings High School and South Dakota State College and attended the Boston Conservatory of Music for one year. She taught piano at South Dakota State College and was a member of the First Baptist Church in Brookings, where she played piano and organ for about 25 years. Cecile was actively involved in music organizations at the local, state, and national levels, including serving as president of the National Music Organization. She was also a member of the BA chapter of PEO and the Sorosis Club. Cecile passed away on October 7, 1973, at Brookings Hospital, after being hospitalized for four weeks.

Elmer Sexauer and Cecile Welch were married on June 28, 1916, in Brookings, South Dakota. They had two children, Dorothy, who died in 1966, and Robert. After Cecile's death, Elmer married Ada Mitchell Dybdahl on December 10, 1974, in Brookings. Ada passed away in 1980.

Scope and Content

This collection includes materials related to the personal and professional lives of Elmer and Cecile Sexauer, such as postcards, diaries, scrapbooks, and essays written by Cecile during her college years. It also contains items like agricultural reports presented to Elmer, certificates from their 50th college reunion, and various family papers. Travel diaries and over

400 postcards document their trips across the U.S., Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe, Canada, and Japan.

The collection offers valuable insight into the lives of Elmer and Cecile Sexauer, highlighting their family history, travels, and involvement in organizations like the Grain and Feed Dealers National Association. It serves as an important resource for understanding their personal experiences and social networks in the early 20th century.

Access Points

Subjects

- Diaries
- Travel journals—20th century

Names

- Baker, Elizabeth Anne
- Sexauer, Elmer Harrison, 1888-1986
- Sexauer, Cecile Irene Welch, 1888-1973
- Grain and Feed Dealers National Association

Places

- South Dakota--Brookings

Genre

- Photographs
 - Postcards
 - Scrapbooks
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Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to all researchers, with materials accessible on-site only and not available for circulation.

For extensive research, scheduling an appointment in advance via phone or email is encouraged, including details about the research topic and intended use.

To access materials, researchers must complete and sign the Registration Form and provide proof of identity (e.g., University ID or driver's license). By signing, researchers agree to adhere to the Reading Room Rules. The registration document also includes guidelines on making copies of materials, correct referencing, and copyright obligations.

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Container List

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
1	1	Agricultural Department reports	1940-1945
1	2	Christmas card list	1971
1	3	Elmer Sexauer Grade School papers	1898-1899

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
1	4	Essays by Cecile Welch Sexauer	1907
1	5	Essays by Cecile Welch Sexauer	1909
1	6	Essay on Ludwig Von Beethoven	undated
1	7	Fiftieth Anniversary of the Class of 1910	1960
1	8	Language paper of Laura Sexauer	1901
1	9	Miscellaneous	undated
1	10	Scrapbook	undated
2	1	Scrapbook: Elizabeth Anne Baker	1947
2	2	Stationery samples	undated
2	3	Travels: Europe	1960
2	4	Travels: Canada, Europe, United States	1910
2	5	Travels: Europe, United States	undated
2	6	Travels: Japan	1961
2	7	Travels: Ocean Cruise: Queen Elizabeth	undated
2	8	Travels: West Indies	1956
2	9	Photographs	1975, undated
3	1	Postcards: Alabama	undated
3	2	Postcards: Arizona	undated
3	3	Postcards: California	undated
3	4	Postcards: Canada	undated
3	5	Postcards: Florida	undated
3	6	Postcards: Georgia	undated
3	7	Postcards: Haiti	undated
3	8	Postcards: Hawaii	undated
3	9	Postcards: Indiana	undated
3	10	Postcards: Jamaica	undated
3	11	Postcards: Kentucky	undated
3	12	Postcards: Louisiana	undated
3	13	Postcards: Mexico	undated
3	14	Postcards: Minnesota	undated
3	15	Postcards: Mississippi	undated
3	16	Postcards: Missouri	undated
3	17	Postcards: Oklahoma	undated
3	18	Postcards: Pennsylvania	undated

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
3	19	Postcards: South Dakota	undated
3	20	Postcards: St. Thomas / Virgin Islands	undated
3	21	Postcards: Tennessee	undated
3	22	Postcards: Texas	undated
3	23	Postcards: Utah	undated
3	24	Postcards: Washington	undated
3	25	Postcards: West Virginia	undated
3	26	Postcards: Miscellaneous	undated
4	1	Scrapbook: 44th Annual Convention of the Grain and Feed Dealers National Association	1940