



The Mary Baker Eddy Library
Minnie B. Weygandt Papers, 1894-1932, n.d.
a finding aid

**The Mary Baker Eddy Library
Archives & Special Collections**
200 Massachusetts Ave.
Boston, MA 02115
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Collection Description

Collection Title: Minnie B. Weygandt Papers

Collection Number: LSC023

Creator: Weygandt, Minnie B.--c.1864–1933

Date: 1894-1932, n.d.

Extent: 0.42 LF

Language: Materials are in English

Acquisition Information

Bequest, 1934.

Access

Collection is open for research and available to the public during research room hours.

Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may apply.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Sarah Schelde, Assistant Archivist, July to September 2019.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Minnie B. Weygandt Papers, LSC023, The Mary Baker Eddy Library.

Biographical Note

Minnie Belle Weygandt (c. 1864–1933) was born in Pennsylvania. She grew up in Fairfield, Iowa, in a Lutheran family of six. She did not at first consider herself a religious person but rather one who “always believed in doing the best I knew how” (Weygandt Reminiscence, p. 3).

Weygandt describes her first encounter with Christian Science as taking place in 1886, when several Christian Science practitioners visited her home town. The first practitioner healed several citizens, including Annie Moore, a relative of the Weygandt family who suffered from consumption. After this healing Weygandt’s eldest sister, Sadie, began reading Mary Baker Eddy’s textbook on Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Another practitioner, John Stewart, was a guest at the hotel where Weygandt worked. She denied interest in the new religion when the owner, Esther S. Beck, brought up the subject. At the time Weygandt said she never experienced illness; rather ironically, she became sick a few weeks later with “about everything there was to have.” She initially declined Beck’s suggestion that she receive prayerful treatment from Stewart, but subsequently he did give absent treatment, meaning that he was not present with her when he prayed. This led to her being “absolutely healed” (Weygandt Reminiscence, p. 2–3).

That healing prompted Weygandt to begin her own study of *Science and Health*. Soon her youngest sister, Mary, also bought a copy of the book. The sisters continued their study without the support of other Christian Scientists, as they lived too remotely to attend a worship service. It wasn’t long before her sister Mary successfully began her own healing practice. In May 1894 she decided to go to Boston to study under Janet T. Colman, an authorized teacher of Christian Science. Six months later Weygandt also became a student of Colman. Both were accepted as members of The Mother Church (The First Church of Christ, Scientist) in June 1894.

When Weygandt moved to Boston about a year later, Colman suggested that she and her sister work for Mr. and Mrs. Edward P. Bates, who had recently moved to Boston from Syracuse, New York, to assist in the building of the original edifice of The Mother Church. Weygandt describes the Bateses as “two very consecrated Christian Scientists who loved Mrs. Eddy above everything” (Weygandt Reminiscence, p. 4). Weygandt worked for them as a cook, and her sister as a maid.

It wasn't long before Weygandt caught the attention of Laura E. Sargent, who managed Eddy's Pleasant View home in Concord, New Hampshire. Sargent requested that she come to Eddy's home to serve as a cook in 1899, a position she dutifully filled for the next eight years. Her sister soon decided to follow and was hired to work at Pleasant View as a maid. Although Weygandt primarily worked in the kitchen, she also helped her sister with various other tasks, including doing the laundry and house cleaning. To ensure her work was to Eddy's specifications, Weygandt dedicated herself to studying new recipes and reading Eddy's favorite guide, *The Young Housekeeper's Friend*. For a period of time, she kept track of the meals she served and recorded them in a notebook.

Weygandt found great satisfaction in her work and appreciated how it also helped her to be a better Christian Scientist. She asked for Eddy's permission to leave her work at Pleasant View in September 1907, in order to dedicate more of her time to the study and practice of Christian Science. Not long after her departure, Eddy moved to a new residence in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, where Weygandt offered her services whenever needed.

For the next five years, Weygandt worked for Mary Armstrong, the wife of church official Joseph Armstrong. She returned to Chestnut Hill in 1912 to work for Sargent, who had been serving as the property's custodian since Eddy's death in 1910. After Sargent's passing in 1914, Weygandt continued to work at Chestnut Hill for the next six years under Sargent's older sister, Victoria Sargent.

Weygandt lived in Boston for the rest of her life. She gave money to Christian Science institutions and donated the letters she had received from Eddy to The Mother Church. Her reminiscences help illuminate life at Pleasant View from the perspective of a central figure in the household. She was still compiling her memories at the time of her death in December 1933.

Gci fWg.

- Frederick, Heather Vogel. *Life at 400 Beacon Street: Working in Mary Baker Eddy's Household*. Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts: Longyear Museum Press, 2019.
- Hyde, Cecila and Weygandt, Minnie B., "Reminiscences of Miss Minnie Bell Weygandt and of Miss Mary Ellen Weygandt," 23 July 1937, Reminiscence.

Scope and Content Note

The Minnie Weygandt Papers include correspondence; personal papers; printed materials; recipes; two notebooks; a scrapbook; and a cookbook. Two series make up the collection. Series I, General Papers, is arranged in chronological order. Series II, Cookbooks and Recipes, is arranged by object type.

Series I, General Papers (1894–1932, n.d.) contains correspondence; notes on Christian Science; pamphlets; documents related to Weygandt's study under Janet T. Colman; and invitations to church dedication services. This series spans the majority of Weygandt's life after she became a Christian Scientist and illustrates the wider scope of her work and contribution to the cause of Christian Science.

Correspondence makes up the majority of the series and includes 11 letters, two Christmas cards from Calvin A. Frye, and three envelopes. Personal letters include one from J. A. Moore, expressing condolences after Mary Weygandt's passing in 1904, and a 1931 letter from Oscar P. Frye regarding photographs Calvin A. Frye took of Eddy. One undated letter from Gilbert Carpenter Jr. includes payment for two sets of pictures from Weygandt.

Letters from church departments express gratitude to Weygandt for the following charitable donations: a contribution to the Committee on Publication for New Hampshire, July 1908; and two letters from the treasurer of The Mother Church (dated 1927 and 1929) for contributions to the Christian Science Pleasant View Home and the Charitable Institutions Fund.

Five letters to Weygandt from the Christian Science Board of Directors include the following requests: photographs of Weygandt and her sister; assistance in identifying members of Eddy's household; and the suggestion to have Beulah Hydelloff (also known as Cecilia Hyde) assist Weygandt in writing her reminiscences.

Other documents related to Christian Science include the following: four undated handwritten notes on topics related to Christian Science; pamphlets: Eddy's poems "to the Little Children" and "to the Big Children"; Weygandt's copy of "Church Tenets and Rules of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass"; invitations to the dedication services for the original edifice of The Mother Church and for First Church of Christ, Scientist, Concord, New Hampshire; a 1894 certificate for completing Primary class instruction under Janet T. Colman; a receipt for that course; and two receipts (dated 1899 and 1900) for membership in Colman's association.

Series II, Cookbooks and Recipes (1899, 1913, n.d.), includes the following materials related to Weygandt's role as cook at Pleasant View from 1899 to 1907:

Recipes handwritten by both Weygandt and others, and recipes clipped from newspapers and other publications.

Two notebooks: one listing meals served at Pleasant view over about a year's time, beginning on April 15, 1900 (Easter Sunday), and another smaller notebook with more handwritten recipes and an accounting list of money spent on personal items from April 1901 to July 1901.

An undated scrapbook of recipes compiled by Weygandt, likely during her tenure at Pleasant View.

A copy of *The Art of Cookery*, by Emma P. Ewing, inscribed by Weygandt on August 24, 1899 at Pleasant View. The book contains notes on the flyleaf pages (four recipes from within the cookbook were removed and placed in their own folder).

Materials

Various materials separated include letters, notebooks, inscribed books, receipts, physical artifacts, and photographs.

Added to the Mary Baker Eddy Collection: a letter (335.45.004) from Eddy to Mary E. Weygandt, added to Incoming Correspondence; 13 letters (L11267–L11279) from Weygandt to Eddy, added to Outgoing Correspondence; eight books inscribed by Eddy for Weygandt, added to Autographed and Inscribed Books (L18222, L18228, L18381, L18400, L18404, L19033, L19037, L19075, and L19076).

Added to the Mary Baker Eddy Book Collection: *The Young Housekeeper's Friend* (B00152), which belonged to Eddy during her own days keeping house. It was kept in the kitchen at Pleasant View, with the inscription "My cooking shall be done according to this cookbook. M.B.G. Eddy." In her reminiscences, Weygandt describes using the book just as the other cooks before her. She took it with her when she left Chestnut Hill in 1920.

Added to the Field Collection: a small card depicting Christian Science Hall in Concord, N.H. and featuring a poem; a program for the dedication services of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Lawrence, Massachusetts. Added to the Subject File: a typescript poem, "Eventide," by Laura E. Sargent; an article on Eddy from the *Weekly Boston Traveler*; a number of receipts, including Weygandt's contributions to First Church of Christ, Scientist, Concord, New Hampshire, and for the rental of pews in The Mother Church from 1895 to 1898; and per capita tax contributions to The Mother Church.

Added to the Historic Photographs Collection (prints and negatives): images of the grounds of Pleasant View and Chestnut Hill, The Mother Church, Christian Science Hall in Concord, New Hampshire, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Concord, and related locations; portraits and candids of Weygandt, Janet T. Colman, and various household staff members at Pleasant View and Chestnut Hill. Photographs confirmed to have come in with the Weygandt estate include P00473, P00574, P00867, P00886, P01475, P01476, P01780, P01790, P01822, P01822.2, P01823, P05479, P05488, P05997, P06709, P06859, P07584, P07585, P07586, and P07587; and an album with pictures of Pleasant View taken by Weygandt (dispersed throughout the photo collection, sometimes without noting origin). See P00722, P00724, P01021, P01174, P01203, P01222, P01537, P01545, P01558, P01572.1, P01773.1, P01821.2, P05464, P05476, P05479, P05483, P05515, P05520, P05548, P05587, P06245, P06246, P06301, P06302, P06311, P06462, P06508, P06591, P06605, P06615, P06621, P06631, P06640, P06663, P06673, P06686, P06796, P06844, P06847, P06857, P06876, P06888, P06898, P06934, P06937, P06956, P06987, P07044, and P07569.

Added to the Art & Artifact Collection: two Christian Science souvenir spoons depicting Pleasant View (1984.37.35 A–C and 1984.37.36 A–C); one souvenir spoon depicting Polish silent film actress Pola Negri (1984.37.86); four pieces of stone from church edifices (1984.37.146.1–4); 32 clothing fragments and samples belonging to Eddy (1984.37.188, 1984.37.189.1–30, and 1984.37.190); and a china vase (0.0991) originally given to Eddy by Judge Septimus J. Hanna, which Eddy gifted to Weygandt after she had admired it.

Other

Materials related to this collection that are also in The Mary Baker Eddy Library's holdings include letters, photographs, and reminiscences.

In June 1924 Weygandt donated eight letters to The Mother Church, responding to a call from the Christian Science Board of Directors for donations of letters written by Eddy. See items L07788–L07795 in The Mary Baker Eddy Collection, Outgoing Correspondence.

Weygandt was an amateur photographer. She took a number of photographs now held in the Historic Photographs Collection, which other individuals have donated. Photographs of Weygandt herself, including both those she took and those taken and donated by others, are also in the Historic Photographs Collection.

A photo album created by Weygandt of her own photographs, which Myrtle A. Ramsay gave to the Library, was disassembled and its photographs distributed throughout the Historic Photographs Collection. An inventory of these photographs, as described by Weygandt and recorded by Ramsay, can be found in the Subject File under "Weygandt, Minnie B."

Reminiscences of Weygandt and her sister Mary can be found in the Reminiscence File.

Series I, General Papers, 1894-1932, n.d.

Box 1, General Papers-Cookbooks and Recipes, 1894-1932, n.d.

Folder 1, General Papers, 1894-1932, n.d.

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| 01 | Church Tenets and Rules of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., 1894/07/06, Johnson, William B. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Pamphlet with form letter, filled in by William B. Johnson, announcing the acceptance of Weygandt's application of membership to The Mother Church on July 1, 1894. |
| 02 | 1894/07/06; 1894/07/09, to Weygandt, Minnie B., Envelope addressed to Weygandt at her home in Creston, Iowa. Postmarked Chelsea, MA with typescript return address for M.F. Eastaman. Notation on envelope says "100 class instruction dues". |
| 03 | 1894/09/17, Colman, Janet T. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Receipt for payment of \$100 in class dues. |
| 04 | 1894/09/23, Colman, Janet T. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Certificate of completion of Colman's primary class. |
| 05 | 1895/01/06, Invitation to the dedication of the original edifice of The First Church of Christ, Scientist (The Mother Church). |
| 06 | <i>To the Little Children and the Big Children</i> , 1896, Eddy, Mary Baker Booklet with illustrated cover and two verses by Eddy. |
| 07 | 1899/09/29, Cate, Annie M. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Receipt for payment of one year's association dues (\$1.00) for Weygandt. |

- 08 1900/04/24, to Weygandt, Minnie B., Envelope addressed to Weygandt at Pleasant View, with Fall River, MA postmark. Notes on front, including one saying "Contributions, per capita, etc. to The Mother Church" and further explanations of where her money went.
- 09 1900/09/13, Cate, Annie M. to Weygandt, Minnie B.; Weygandt, Mary E., Receipt for payment of one year's association dues (\$2.00) for the Weygandt sisters.
- 10 1904/07/17, Invitation to the dedication of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Concord, NH.
- 11 1908/07/20, Jamison, Charles B. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter thanking Weygandt for her \$5.00 money order contributing to the Committee on Publication for the State of New Hampshire.
- 12 1913/12, Frye, Calvin A. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Card for Christmas 1913 and New Year 1914.
- 13 1924/06/03, Warren, Lucia C. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter on behalf of the Christian Science Board of Directors thanking Weygandt for the donation to The Mother Church of letters from Eddy to her and her sister, Mary. Asks whether she would like copies made.
- 14 1924/06/11, Warren, Lucia C. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter sent with copies made of her letters from Eddy (See Warren letter of 1924/06/03).
- 15 1927/07/28, Ripley, Edward L. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter from Treasurer of The Mother Church, thanking Weygandt for her gift to The Christian Science Pleasant View Home.
- 16 1929/01/08, Ripley, Edward L. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter from Treasurer of The Mother Church, thanking Weygandt for her gift to The Charitable Institutions Fund.
- 17 1931/01/15, Warren, Lucia C. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter from the Board, asking Weygandt for photos of her and her sister, as part of a collection of photographs of those who served in Eddy's household they are developing.
- 18 1931/04/28, Warren, Lucia C. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter asking Weygandt if she could come to the Board office and identify individuals in pictures of Eddy's household.
- 19 1931/04/28, Frye, Oscar H.P. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter regarding photos Calvin Frye took of Eddy which he showed Weygandt. Regrets showing her these photos, and says he will not show others.

- 20 1932/09/17, Warren, Lucia C. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter offering the aid of Beulah Hydelloff in assisting Weygandt to write her reminiscences. Mentions Hydelloff has worked on reminiscences of other early students of Christian Science.
- 21 n.d., Carpenter, Gilbert Jr. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Typescript letter sent with check for \$3.00 in exchange for Weygandt sending two sets of pictures.
- 22 n.d., Frye, Calvin A. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Christmas Card, business card size with small image, typescript note, and signature.
- 23 n.d., Moore, J.A. to Weygandt, Minnie B., Handwritten letter expressing sympathy on the passing of Weygandt's sister, Mary. Also mentions receiving her note with enclosed contribution. On First Church of Christ, Scientist, Concord, N.H. letterhead
- 24 n.d., to Weygandt, Minnie B., Envelope addressed Weygandt at Chestnut Hill, MA. No return address information or postmarks.
- 25 n.d., Weygandt, Minnie B. to , Handwritten notes on Christian Science. Includes page titled "Work to be done every day" with page numbers and sections from Eddy's writings; a page titled "Youth's Argument"; one quote by Eddy; and one unattributed quote.

Series II, Cookbooks and Recipes, 1899-1901, 1913, n.d.

Box 1, General Papers-Cookbooks and Recipes, 1894-1932, n.d.

- LSC023.CB01 *The Art of Cookery: A Manual for Homes and Schools*, 1899/08/24, Weygandt, Minnie B. to , Cookbook written by Emma P. Ewing and published in 1896. Inscribed "Minnie B. Weygandt. Aug. 24, 1899. 'Pleasant View' Concord, N.H.". Some additional recipes and notes written on flyleaf pages. Folder with four recipes removed from cookbook included in box.
- LSC023.NB01 1901, n.d., Weygandt, Minnie B. Small notebook containing some recipes and accounting notes on personal items.
- LSC023.SB01 n.d., Weygandt, Minnie B. Scrapbook compiled by Weygandt. Includes newspaper clippings of recipes.

Folder 2, Loose Recipes and Clippings, 1913, n.d.

- 01 German pancake with strawberries., n.d., Handwritten recipe. Unknown hand.
- 02 Good Mustard Pickle, n.d., Weygandt, Minnie B. Handwritten recipe.

- 03 Ginger Ice Cream, n.d., Handwritten recipe. Says "G.G. Long" on bottom. Possibly Long's handwriting.
- 04 Baked Indian Pudding, n.d., Handwritten recipe. Says "Mrs. Hulin" on bottom. Possibly Hulin's handwriting.
- 05 Tomato Jelly., n.d., Handwritten recipe. Unknown hand.
- 06 n.d., Handwritten recipes. Unknown hand.
- 07 How to preserve strawberries, n.d., Handwritten recipe. Unknown hand.
- 08 n.d., Weygandt, Minnie B. Handwritten recipe.
- 09 Pumpkin Pie, n.d., Handwritten recipe. Unknown hand.
- 10 Delicate Pudding; Snow Pudding, n.d., Handwritten recipes, 2 on one page. Possibly Weygandt's writing.
- 11 With Designer Cooks, 1913/07, Newspaper clipping. Contains various reader-submitted recipes.
- 12 n.d., Newspaper clippings. Two pages of various clippings pasted to backing paper. No newspaper information or dates included.
- 13 Miles of Motion Pictures, n.d., Newspaper clipping pasted to backing paper. Unknown newspaper. May have been included in book with other, recipe-related clippings.

Folder 3, Menu Notebook, 1900-1901

- 01 1900-1901, Weygandt, Minnie B. Notebook containing menus of meals served at Pleasant View from Easter Sunday, April 15, 1900 until May 1901.