

Sherman, Clara Alquist (1877-1944)

Diary: vol. 1, Mar. 3, 1931-Dec. 9, 1934; vol. 2, Dec. 10, 1934-Feb. 2, 1939. Deerfield, Mass.

2 vols. manuscript 27.5cm

Alquist-Sherman Family Papers, Box 1, folder 1

Note: Diary kept by a rather impoverished artist describing Deerfield life during the Great Depression years. Much of the diary paints a sensitive, artistic portrait of the landscape, flora and fauna on Eaglebrook Hill. Sherman was a good amateur ornithologist and naturalist, devoting most of her pages to Golden Crowned Knights, Pileated Woodpeckers, squirrels, black snakes, etc. She preferred them to human company, but nevertheless, the diary provides good portraits of Deerfield citizenry. She had a keen ear for speech and records most of her encounters with people in dialogue fashion. 1934: "Mrs. Biddle says: Mr. Boyden is not going to let any more girls into the Academy." – "Take it with a pinch of salt, Claire." The diary includes Henry Wells, Lincoln Wells, Harriet Childs, Arthur Fuller, Richard Arms, Elizabeth Boyden, and most particularly Kelsey Flower. Mrs. Sherman was apparently from the Hartford, Ct., area originally, but had lived in Franklin County with her husband for many years. The diary is interspersed with brief literary sketches and reminiscences. She was appointed an "easel painter" under the W.P.A. "Dropped the prices on my town views Bunker Hill 50, Manse 50, J. Williams Door 50." She had a caustic wit and was something of a feminist. Vol. 2 concludes with memoranda, sketches, etc.