Forerunners – Franklin Academy (1881-1922)

Register of Franklin Academy
(Franklin, Nebraska)

Doane College Archives
Perkins Library
Doane College
Crete, Nebraska
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Processed by Madison Greif and Dylan Relue

Scope and Content

From: http://nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/organize/franklin.htm

“In August of 1879, Rev. C.S. Harrison made plans to create a Christian academy to service western Nebraska. Harrison chose the town of Franklin because there were no saloons or other secondary schools in the area. The following year Rev. Amos Dresser was appointed financial agent, and with the help of others money, erected the first academy building in 1880. Franklin Academy was finally opened on February 9, 1881 as one of several Congregationalist church academies in the Midwest.

In 1884 Harrison was chosen to be the pastor of the academy and was responsible for getting a second academy building, a three story girls’ dormitory, built. A small building was also built for a boys’ dormitory, but it burned down in 1901. Later, a third building known as the music hall was added along with the enlargement of the original academy building.

During its years of service, Franklin Academy had several principals, the first being Rev. W. S. Hampton and the longest serving being Prof. Alexis C. Hart. Most of the instructors at Franklin Academy were fresh out of college and many on their first teaching assignments. Franklin Academy offered programs in piano, voice expression, and business, along with a regular high school curriculum.
Athletics were also a very important part of life at Franklin Academy with team sports in football and basketball, along with track and field. During the academyís 41 years of service, thousands of students attended, and the academy grew to a student body of 158 in 1921. Franklin Academy attempted to keep tuition low so that a Christian education could be available to anyone who sought it. This forced the academy to become reliant on donations to operate, which each successive year became more difficult to obtain. The early 20th century also saw the rise of the state secondary school program, which forced Franklin Academy to decide whether or not continuing operations was fiscally possible. The administration deemed it was not, and Franklin Academy operated until June of 1922 when it, like many other Congregationalist academies, was shut down due to lack of funds.”

**Arrangement**

The arrangement of the collection has been done by the Doane College Archives staff.

**Provenance**

**INVENTORY**

**Box 01** Anonymous Document - Brief summary of Franklin Academy. Location, information about the school, building information, and contributors. Brief details about the school itself and the church in the community.

Fld 1 1881-1897: The Franklin Academy Catalogues. Calendar of events and information on board of trustees, location, the student board, tuition, and lectures/courses.

Fld 1.2 1901-1911: More Catalogues of the Franklin Academy

Fld 2 1921: Franklin Bulletin that includes announcements about money, religion, enrollment, courses, and investment. Mostly, advertisements asking for money.
Fld 3 1900-1915: Franklin Academy Quarterly. Information on the faculty, students, commencement programs, and events. Also includes the Franklin Academy Song, Keep It Going, along with music. Two of the Franklin Academy Quarterly include an invitation to the commencement.

Fld 4 1886-1922: Franklin Academy Mirror (newspaper). Articles published by faculty along with advertisements. Some include poetry that could have been written by the students. Comic Letter to the Editors in some. Pictures of men and womens sports teams.

Fld 5 1894: The Story of Franklin Academy Pamphlet. Photos of the buildings and other people of administration. Explaining what needs to be done around the academy and what money is needed.

Fld 6 1882: Dedication to the Franklin Academy speech. 33 pages of handwritten text about the Christian education offered at Franklin Academy.

Fld 7 Unknown date (roughly 1920s): The Doane-Franklin Campaign. Franklin is running out of monkey and Doane is not. Includes newspaper clippings and letters written to the president of Doane. Letters lead up to the closing of Franklin Academy.

Fld 8 Unknown Dates (roughly 1900): Donation letters to Franklin Academy including handwritten letters.

Fld 9 Unknown Dates: Academies For the West. Franklin Academy Mirror, and other news articles. Some explain why Franklin Academy is failing.

Fld 10 Around 1901: Financial information about Franklin Academy. Log of all the receipts and repairs. Log of the scholarship fund.

Fld 11 Unknown Dates: Donation lists - names of people and how much they donated. Includes a list of debts and that they were paid off.

Fld 12 Unknown Date: Small square pledge cards. Gift Records of money donated. More Franklin Mirrors that could not fit in fld 4.

**Box 02** Artifact 1 1904-1910: Grade Records. Wrapped in plastic with red rippod

Artifact 2 1911-1922: Grade Records. Also, a communication note from the University of Nebraska and one financial statement.
Artifact 3 1917-1918: Grade Records. Also included a letter from the 1930s asking for a transcript of grades.

Artifact 4 1919-1922: Cash Book - handwritten.
Artifact 5 1920-1922: Cash Book - handwritten

Artifact 6 Unknown dates (possibly 1886): Book is in really bad condition. Includes minutes from the Philologian Society meetings. A lot of handwritten notes.

Artifact 7 1907: Franklin Academy Quarterly number 4. Pictures of the track team and senior class.

Artifact 8 1884-1914: Copies of The Franklin Academy Mirror including the original Mirror, The Story of Franklin Academy. Small note on why we go to college.

Box 3

01 Ledger: Grade Record 1888-1907