Agassiz, Elizabeth Cabot Cary, 1822-1907. Records of Radcliffe College President Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz, 1879-1978: A Finding Aid
## Table of Contents

Summary Information ................................................................. 3
Biography .................................................................................. 3
Scope And Content ................................................................. 4
Container List .................................................................. 4
Collection Inventory ........................................................... 5
Controlled Access Headings .................................................... 9
Summary Information

Repository: Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute
Creator: Agassiz, Elizabeth Cabot Cary, 1822-1907
Title: Records of Radcliffe College President Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz, 1879-1978
Identifier: SC 99
Date: 1879-1978
Physical Description: 2 linear feet (2 cartons)
Language Of Materials: Materials in English.

Overview:
Correspondence, speeches, reports, etc., of Elizabeth Cabot Agassiz, first president of Radcliffe College.

Immediate Source Of Acquisition:
Accession number: R87-32
This collection was received from Bay Bank Harvard Trust Company and deposited in the Radcliffe College Archives on loan in August 1978.

Processing Information:
Processed: November 1987
By: Jane S. Knowles

Related Material:
There is related material at the Schlesinger Library; see Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Papers, 1884-1959 (SC-4); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Papers, 1838-1920 (A-9); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Papers, 1859-1879 (A/A262); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Letter, 1898 March 30 (A/A262a); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Letters, 1891, 1907 (A/A262b); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Letters, undated (A/A262c); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Letter, 1868 October 21 (A/A262d); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Postcards, 1905-1908 (A/A262e); Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Letter, undated (A/A262f).

Preferred Citation:
Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz Papers, 1879-1978; item description, dates. SC 99, folder #. Radcliffe College Archives, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

Return to Table of Contents

Biography

Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, educator and college president, was born in Boston, December 5, 1822, and married the Swiss naturalist Louis Agassiz in 1850. She was an educational reformer, member of the Woman’s Education Association, but never an advocate of women's suffrage or of co-education. Agassiz administered the Agassiz School for Girls from 1855 to 1863. She was one of the managers of the program for the Private Collegiate Instruction for Women (also known as the Harvard Annex); was president of the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women (1882-1894), first president of Radcliffe 1894-1900, and then honorary president, 1900-1903.

Agassiz guided the college through its early years. She negotiated the permanent institutional tie with Harvard and the incorporation of Radcliffe College in 1894 as a degree-granting agency. Her addresses at "parlor meetings" elicited substantial support for the college and made possible the purchase of properties bordering on Brattle, Mason, Garden, Streets and Appian
Way which eventually formed the Radcliffe Yard, and the Phillips and Bemis estate on Concord Avenue which was laid out by her nephew Guy Lowell as the dormitory quadrangle. The funds for Agassiz House were raised largely by the Agassiz family as an eightieth birthday tribute in 1902, and became the student center and third permanent building in the Yard.

Scope And Content

The records of Radcliffe College President Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz includes incoming correspondence, drafts of outgoing letters, speeches, reports, commencement addresses, a trunk box, and other papers by and about Agassiz. The papers document the Harvard-Radcliffe relationship, Radcliffe's incorporation (1894), the alumnae revolt protesting the denial of the Harvard degree to Radcliffe students, and negotiations over the award of the PhD at Radcliffe. There is information about bequests to the college, and fundraising campaigns. The papers were collected by Lucy Allen Paton, Agassiz's biographer, and some were published in Paton's biography *The Life of Elizabeth Cary Agassiz* (Boston, 1919).

Container List

- Carton 1: 1-40
- Carton 2: 41m
Collection Inventory

  Identifier: 1. Carton 1
  General Note:
  See also #29.

Letters to Agassiz, 1880-1892.
  Identifier: 2. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  E.M. Minturn re: Barnard College; William E. Byerly, Charles Lamnon, Lilian Horsford (Farlow) re: gift of desks to Fay House; Arthur Gilman with enclosures documenting the early years of Radcliffe; students' contributions to the Harvard Monthly; Sarah Wyman Whitman and Marion Hovey re: gift to the Annex Fund.

Letters to Agassiz re: fund drives, 1883-1890.
  Identifier: 3. Carton 1

Letters to Agassiz, 1893.
  Identifier: 4. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  Arthur Gilman with typescript enclosure from Dr. Folsom re: "vast hordes of ill-educated women doctors" and need for exercise for Annex girls; Marion Hovey and Joseph B. Warner re: purchase of the Gray estate; letters of congratulation to Agassiz over the vote to establish a permanent relationship with Harvard and create Radcliffe College.

Letters to Agassiz, 1893-1894.
  Identifier: 5. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  The Woman's Education Association with the Annex over the campaign to raise $150,000 endowment; Alice Freeman Palmer, E. R. Cabot, Katherine Loring, Charles W. Eliot re: equivalence of the Radcliffe degree with Harvard's, the permanence of the Harvard/Radcliffe relationship and quality of instruction; draft letters to "Lily;" Arthur Gilman on the prospects for Radcliffe.

Agassiz's address to the Woman's Education Association
  Identifier: 6. Carton 1

Letters to Agassiz, 1893-1894.
  Identifier: 7. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  Re: Incorporation of Radcliffe: draft letters to Charles W. Eliot and John Chipman Gray; Edward W. Hooper: "desire to protect Harvard from what seems a risky experiment in co-education;" Charles W. Eliot and Joseph B. Warner; George Hale returning his fee; John Chipman Gray on signing Radcliffe's charter, 23 March 1894; Charles W. Eliot on form of Radcliffe diploma.

Letters to Agassiz, 1893-1894.
  Identifier: 8. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  Andrew McFarland Davis and other genealogists re: Ann Radcliffe. Charles W. Eliot to Agassiz suggesting use of Radcliffe's name for the Annex; Davis' article on Ann Radcliffe.

Letters to Agassiz, January-February 1894.
  Identifier: 9. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  Petition by 46 alumnae protesting the incorporation of Radcliffe College, and the decision to grant Radcliffe, not Harvard degrees. Correspondents include: Elizabeth Briggs, petition organizer, Lilian Horsford, Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, various petitioners retracting their opposition, and alumnae supporters. Printed articles and clippings.

Letters to Agassiz, 28 February 1894.
  Identifier: 10. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  Two handwritten drafts of Agassiz's speech to the legislature.

Letters to Agassiz, 1894.
  Identifier: 11. Carton 1
  Scope And Contents:
  George S. Hale with Agassiz re: Sarah Parker's bequest to Radcliffe; Agassiz's description of the duties of the Dean and Agnes Irwin's acceptance of the Deanship; letters of congratulation from Charles E. Norton, William W. Goodwin, and Lilian Horsford. Mary Coes refusing the office of Recorder and accepting position of Secretary.
Letters to Agassiz, 1895-1897.
**Identifier:** 12. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Agnes Irwin's annual report, discussing the need for dormitories to prevent Radcliffe from becoming a local college. Caroline Farley's report on a survey of librarian's wages and the size of the library. Arthur Gilman on the sale of the Gilman School to the college.

Letters to Agassiz, 1895.
**Identifier:** 13. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Handwritten draft of Agassiz's lecture on Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

Reports on Newnham College, 1881-1894, Girton College, 1882, 1894; Cambridge exams, 1883-1892.
**Identifier:** 14. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Handwritten draft of Agassiz's lecture on Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

Letters to Agassiz, 1896-1898.
**Identifier:** 15. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Gift by Harriet Lawrence Hemenway of the Hemenway Gymnasium includes Agassiz's drafts and speech at the opening, Sarah Wyman Whitman's sketch of the plaque.

Letters to Agassiz, 1897-1898.
**Identifier:** 16. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
From Agassiz re: Ph.D degree for Kate Petersen; Josiah Royce to Agnes Irwin with report of the Committee on Honors and Higher Degrees of the Division of Philosophy in Harvard University re: Ethel Puffer.

Letters to Agassiz, 1898-1899.
**Identifier:** 17. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Agassiz's drafts re: purchase of land for dormitories; re: Clara B. Kimball's decision to proceed with construction of a dormitory "now that the Phillips and Bemis lots are actually purchased;" National Geographic Membership, support for the Woman's Table at the Zoological Station at Naples; to Joseph B. Warner on his resignation. Choral Society's vote of thanks to Agassiz. See also #30.

Letters to Agassiz, 1900.
**Identifier:** 18. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
To Agassiz on her 80th birthday including M. Carey Thomas, Sarah Wyman Whitman, and a poem from Le Baron Russell Briggs.

Letters to Agassiz, 1900.
**Identifier:** 19. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Association of Collegiate Alumnae: M. Carey Thomas with questionnaire and circulars re: investigation into health, occupation, and marriage rates of college women.

Letters to Agassiz, 1901-1902.
**Identifier:** 20. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Constitution of Women's Auxiliary of the Civil Service Reform Association, 1901; George B. Dorr enclosing history of the School of Education by Paul H. Hanus; Agnes Irwin; Robert Minot, John F. Moors and Agassiz re: Susan Cabot Richardson's bequest of $200,000 to Radcliffe. A.W. Longfellow acknowledging Agassiz's appreciation of Bertram Hall. John MacDuffie concerning his wife (Abbie Parsons MacDuffie's) degree.

Letters to Agassiz, 1902.
**Identifier:** 21. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
To Ida Higginson re: Agassiz's 80th birthday.

Letters to Agassiz, 1902.
**Identifier:** 22. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
To Ida Higginson re: Agassiz's 80th birthday.

Letters to Agassiz, 1902-1905.
**Identifier:** 23. Carton 1  
**Scope And Contents:**  
Donors to Agassiz House, Agassiz's speech at opening, manuscript draft; Eliza Hoppin on needs of Agassiz House.
Letters to Agassiz, 1903.
Identifier: 24. Carton 1
Scope And Contents: Election of Le Baron Russell Briggs as President of Radcliffe: Le Baron Russell Briggs' acceptance, Sarah Wyman Whitman on election procedures; Mary Coes, Agnes Irwin, Charles W. Eliot.

Letters to Agassiz, 1903-1904.
Identifier: 25. Carton 1
Scope And Contents: Letters from students re: Agassiz's retirement; Agnes Irwin on college business and Agassiz House; Agassiz to Emma Cary re: her last commencement and her hopes for the future of Radcliffe; Abbie P. MacDuffie; John F. Moors re: proposed gift of $200,000 from Mary B. Gardner; Greenleaf estate; Caroline Hazard.

Letters to Agassiz, 1904.
Identifier: 26. Carton 1
Scope And Contents: Agassiz re: death of Sarah Wyman Whitman; also speech by Sarah Wyman Whitman, 1891.

Letters to Agassiz, undated.
Identifier: 27. Carton 1
Scope And Contents: Beulah Dix Flebbe, "what I owe to Radcliffe College," typescript; Agassiz to Miss Soulsby: thoughts on women's education, notes and memos; memorial notices for Professors Greenough and Goodwin.

Memorial meeting for Agassiz, 8 December 1907.
Identifier: 28. Carton 1
Reports by Agassiz. "Means to be taken for establishing the Annex on a permanent basis, 1881?" Description of the progress of the Annex, 1883.
Identifier: 29. Carton 1
Reports by Agassiz, 1890, letter with report to the Editor of the Transcript, 1893; 1897, 1900.
Identifier: 30. Carton 1
General Note: See also #18.

Commencement addresses by Agassiz and Le Baron Russell Briggs, 1883, 1886, 1893, 1894, undated.
Identifier: 31. Carton 1
Commencement addresses by Agassiz and Le Baron Russell Briggs, 1897
Identifier: 32. Carton 1
Commencement addresses by Agassiz and Le Baron Russell Briggs, 1898
Identifier: 33. Carton 1
Commencement addresses by Agassiz and Le Baron Russell Briggs, 1899.
Identifier: 34. Carton 1
Scope And Contents: Includes lists of graduates.
Commencement addresses by Le Baron Russell Briggs, 1905
Identifier: 35. Carton 1
Programs, reports, and other printed material re: Radcliffe, 1885-1906
Identifier: 36. Carton 1
Statutes, bylaws, 1899
Identifier: 37. Carton 1
Pamphlets, clippings re: Radcliffe, Agassiz, and Agnes Irwin, undated.
Identifier: 38. Carton 1
Re: exhibition of Agassiz papers, 1978
Identifier: 39. Carton 1
Envelopes annotated by Lucy A. Paton
Identifier: 40. Carton 1
Trunk box, undated.

Identifier: 41m. Carton 2

Physical Facet:
Rectangular, leather-covered wood box with nail trim and a leather handle on top. Nail trim in oval shape around handle. Metal latch and lock on the front. Interior has leather lid supports and light green paper lining with green, white, and red design.
Controlled Access Headings

- Agassiz House (Cambridge, Mass.)
- Educators
- Eliot, Charles William, 1834-1926
- Harvard University. Graduate School of Education
- Librarians
- Paton, Lucy Allen
- Radcliffe College
- Radcliffe Yard (Cambridge, Mass.)
- Whitman, Sarah
- Women--Education
- Women--Education--Great Britain--History--19th century
- Women--Education--United States.

Return to Table of Contents