

**Papers of
Agnes Smith
Lewis and
Margaret
Dunlop
Gibson**

**Reference:
DA61**

Papers of Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

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Papers of Agnes Smith Lewis and
Margaret Dunlop Gibson

1883-1903

Scrapbooks of press cuttings collected by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson relating to their travels, publications, and in particular, ASL's discovery in St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, of a text of the Syriac Gospels, in 1892.

Agnes Smith Lewis was born in 1843, the elder twin daughter of John Smith of Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland. She was educated at Irvine Academy until the age of 12, then at private schools (Birkenhead and London) till the age of 18, and afterwards by private tuition. From an early age, she and her sister demonstrated an extraordinary talent for languages which, with their strong Presbyterian beliefs, were to characterise the rest of their lives. The twins' father died in 1866, leaving them independently wealthy. This wealth financed their studies of languages (including Syriac, Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew) and their travels in the Middle East. Their interest in early Biblical manuscripts took them on many journeys to the Monastery of St Catherine in Sinai, where, in 1892, they discovered the Codex Sinaiticus, a text of the Gospels in Syriac, which probably dates from the late fourth century. Agnes Smith Lewis published many scholarly and popular works relating to this and other discoveries, as well as a number of novels. She visited St Catherine's several times and produced a catalogue of many of the manuscripts in the library. Agnes Smith Lewis was awarded honorary degrees from the Universities of Halle, St Andrews, Heidelberg, and Dublin. She and her sister endowed Westminster College, Cambridge, a training college for Presbyterian ministers. She married the Rev. Samuel Savage Lewis in 1887 - he died in 1891.

Papers of Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

Arranged chronologically according to the earliest item in each scrapbook.

3 volumes

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English

The scrapbooks were acquired in 1927 by G. A. B. Barnard, who gave them to George Cadbury for deposit in the Rendel Harris Library at the Selly Oak Colleges. The Library was transferred to the Orchard Learning Resources Centre which was opened in 1997 following the merger of the Selly Oak Colleges Library and the Westhill College Library. In 2000, the custodianship of all archive collections held at the Orchard Learning Resources Centre was transferred to the University of Birmingham

Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections Department has letters from Agnes Smith Lewis to James Rendel Harris in the papers of James Rendel Harris and Helen Balkwill Harris (DA21).

Westminster and Cheshunt College (GB 0278), letters from Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson.

Papers of Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

DA61/1 Scrapbook of press cuttings kept by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson 1883-1892

Scrapbook of press cuttings kept by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson. The cuttings are mainly reviews of their books or of books by MDG's husband, James Young Gibson, although there are also some letters to the press discussing Catholicism and socialism. Includes:

pp /1-/6 Reviews of JYG's translation of Cervantes' 'Journey to Parnassus', 1883;

/7-/18 Reviews of John Ormsby's translation of 'The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha' and JYG's 'Numantia: A Tragedy', 1885-1886;

/19-/22 Obituaries on the death of JYG, 1886;

/23-/29 and /31 Review of 'The Cid Ballads, and Other Poems and Translations from Spanish and German', by JYG, edited by MDG, 1887;

/32-/34, /37, /40-/41 letters from MDG and others to the Cambridge Chronicle discussing Catholicism, 1888;

/35-/36 letters from MDG to the Independent Press, discussing socialism, and; loose cutting Review of 'Life of the Rev Samuel Lewis', by ASL, 1892;

/52-/53 letters from MDG written from St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai describing her travels with ASL, 1892; reviews of 'Alcestis of Euripides' by MDG, 1887.

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Papers of Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

DA61/2

Scrapbook of press cuttings kept by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

1887-1903

The scrapbook contains cuttings of articles by and letters from Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson published in various newspapers and journals. It includes: Loose, at the beginning of the volume, 2 letters relating to the deposit of the scrapbooks in the Rendel Harris library, 1927.

pp /i-/xiv cuttings mostly about the discovery of the Syriac Gospels in 1892, mixed up with biographies of the sisters, and reviews of their books and lectures.

pp /1-/8, /18-/24 mostly reviews of the second edition of 'The Cid Ballads', by James Young Gibson, husband of MDG, 1898;

/10-/16, /26-/27 mostly reviews of 'In the Shadows of Sinai' by ASL, 1898;

/29-/33 reviews of 'The Story of Ahikar', by Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare [scholar, expert on Armenia], James Rendel Harris, and ASL, 1899;

/34 -/35 reports on award to ASL of Doctor of Philosophy by Halle University, 1900;

/36-/37 article by MDG about a Syriac Gospel palimpsest stolen from the Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai, 1902;

/39-/40 description of ASL's visit to the Orientalist Congress in Hamburg, 1902;

/60-/62 articles describing the laying of the memorial stone at Westminster College, Cambridge, 1897.

Some cuttings have been pasted into the index pages at the front of the volume; these pages have been numbered from 1-14. The pages in the body of the book have also been numbered from 1

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onwards. The description above uses Roman numerals when referring to the index pages, and Arabic for the main part of the book.

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DA61/3

Scrapbook of press cuttings kept by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson

1895-1903

Press cuttings collected by Agnes Smith Lewis. Most of the cuttings are either reports about her discovery of a Syriac version of the Gospels in St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, or reviews of her books. Some cuttings have been pasted into the index pages at the front of the volume: /T, article about ASL's discovery of the Syriac Gospels, 1893; /UV, cuttings on the same subject, 1895. The main part of the book includes:

pp /1-/111 cuttings re ASL's visits to St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai and reviews of her 'Some Pages of the Four Gospels retranscribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest', 1895-7;

/114-/120 reviews of 'Our Journey to Sinai' by Mrs RL Bensley, 1896-7;

/121-/125 reviews of ASL's 'Apocrypha Syriaca', 1902-3;

/126 article about ASL's discovery of the Syriac Gospels, 1895.

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