Guide to the
William Cumming Story diary
1867-1870
MssCol 2897

Summary

Creator: Story, William Cumming, b. 1851

Title: William Cumming Story diary

Date: 1867-1870

Size: .42 linear feet (2 volumes)

Abstract: William Cumming Story kept these diaries (2 vols.) from October 1, 1867 through May 31, 1870 in Chicago, Illinois where he served as an usher at Crosby's Opera House while employed as a clerk in the banking office and paper store of A. C. Badger until March 1870, when he entered the employment of Lyon and Healy. Entries record the operas, plays, concerts, lectures, and other events that he attended at Crosby's Opera House, McVickars Theater, the Music Hall, and other places of amusement and include critical comments Story also describes the following, among other topics: a Republican demonstration celebrating the election of President Ulysses S. Grant; the Women's Rights Convention held at Library Hall on February 23, 1869; the celebration of the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad on May 10, 1869; the "Negro problem" in Washington, D. C. and throughout the country; the first presentation in English in America of Mozart's opera, "The Marriage of Figaro," on November 10, 1869; a visit to Janesville, Wisconsin for Christmas in 1869; labor troubles at mills in Batavia, Illinois in February 1870; the meanness and sordidness of the people of the day; sneers at the government by foreigners; comments on the protective tariff; the attitude of Chicago's public toward the legitimate theater; incidents of home life with his father, formerly of New Rochelle, New York, his stepmother, and his brother, Frank; and books he read. The diaries also include pen and ink drawings. The first volume covers the period of October 1, 1867-September 30, 1868 and is numbered "No. 3." In the reverse of this volume is a calendar of events at Crosby's Opera House from March 29, 1867 through October 15, 1868; miscellaneous accounts, 1867-1868; and a list of books received from the Young Men's Association, 1867-1868. The second volume covers the period of October 1, 1868 through May 31, 1870. In the reverse of this volume is an account of receipts and expenses from January 1, 1869 through June 12, 1870

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: William Cumming Story diary, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library
Key Terms

Geographic Names
Chicago (Ill.) -- Social life and customs
United States -- Race relations

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Diaries
Pen-and-wash drawings

Subjects
Opera -- Illinois -- Chicago
Suffragists -- United States
Teenage boys -- Books and reading
Theater -- Illinois -- Chicago
Ushers -- Diaries

Names
Story, William Cumming, b. 1851
Grant, Ulysses S. (Ulysses Simpson), 1822-1885
Crosby's Opera House
Lyon & Healy
Union Pacific Railroad Company