

# Ida Porter Collection

Processed by  
Carol Straka Winter 2012

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Folder Inventory

## Collection Information:

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	One box
COLLECTION DATES:	1882-1913
PROVENANCE:	Some fragile items; ask archivist for assistance.
RESTRICTIONS:	
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also: Evergreen Discovery Cemetery Walk files

## Brief History

### Ida Porter (1863-1947)

Ida Porter was born on September 19, 1863 in Normal, Illinois. She was the eldest child of Solomon S. and Amanda M. Shueey Porter. Her Ohio-born parents moved to Illinois in 1857; in 1858 they moved to Normal where her father bought a sizeable acreage to farm, about 378 acres.

Ida had six other siblings, four of whom survived to adulthood. After her father's death, Ida's mother and three brothers moved to Franklin County, Iowa. Her mother died in 1910 in Iowa and was brought back to Bloomington, IL for burial.

Ida was well educated. At the age of 26, she traveled by ship to Paris, France to study in 1889. She traveled on the Red Star Line, where she was listed as a cabin passenger. While in Paris, she studied at the Academy of Music under M. Ezio Ciampi and M. Lemaire, from the Italian schools of singing. She studied dance, piano, French, singing, and public speaking.

After Ida had completed her studies in France, she returned to the United States on May 10, 1890, where she gave many recitals in various cities around the country, including ones in Bloomington, Ottawa, Peoria, and Danville, IL, Lafayette and Indianapolis, IN, Omaha, NE, and Fort Worth, TX. Ida was a soprano who could sing in English, German, French, and Italian; both classical and modern concert songs, cavatinas, and arias. In a program from one of her performances, she was described as "one of the recognized soloists of the West." She was praised with high reviews for her singing and musical ability by many newspapers around the country during the time. The Bloomington *Leader* stated that called her voice always full, rich, round, and sweet. One of her brothers, Walter G. Porter, an attorney, was her manager during her singing career.

Around 1893, Ida began teaching voice lessons and was the manager of the Bloomington Conservatory of Music located at 311 North Main Street. There she taught voice culture and singing. One private 45 minute lesson with Ida would cost \$12.45, which in today's economy would be almost \$254.

Towards the end of her life, she moved to Monona County, Iowa, where her brothers Walter and William were living. She died on August 17, 1947 at the age of 84 in Onawa, Monona County, IA. She was brought back to Bloomington, IL, where she was buried at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery with the rest of her family.

Adapted from biography by Candace Summers, 2005.

## Scope Note

This collection includes publicity materials for Porter and the Bloomington Conservatory of Music; materials from her study trip to Paris in 1889/90; books and lesson notes on an array of topics, etc.

## **Box 1 (8 Folders)**

### **Trip to Paris in 1889-90 (Folders 1-2)**

#### Folder 1: Paris

- 1.1.1 "Crystal Palace Programme," 25 Nov 1889, 12pp.
- 1.1.2 "The North-Western Passage to London via Holyhead and Liverpool," reprinted from Mr. Francis George Heath's Pictorial Magazine, n.d., 8 pp.
- 1.1.3 "Soiree du 17 Avril Audition des Eleves de M.& Mme Ezio Ciampi," recital program including Porter performing from Handel's Messiah, 17 Apr 1890.
- 1.1.4 "Tableau des Services Religieux," Eglise Reformee de Paris, (schedule of services by Reformed Church of Paris), Mar-Jun 1890.
- 1.1.5 Cards from stores:
  - Bibliotheque de l'Etoile – private library to read periodicals/newspapers including English, etc.
  - a l'Eglise St. Roch – clothing for ladies of "a certain age"
  - Maison Epse. Ferrier Piette - lace maker
  - F. Diegerick Lucc – lace maker
  - card from French thread
- 1.1.6 Red Star Line passenger list, 10 May 1890 from Antwerp to NYC.
- 1.1.7 List of French words and phrases, Pantagraph, n.d.
- 1.1.8 Three empty envelopes addressed to individuals in Paris, n.d.

#### Folder 2: Personal Organizer

- 1.2.1 Bound organizer from Department Stores of Louvre with info about Paris. Porter recorded entries for several days in Jan-Mar 1890.

### **Music Career (Folder 3)**

#### Folder 3: Music publicity materials

- 1.3.1 Brochure for Bloomington Conservatory of Music, Aug 1893, 12 pp. Ida Porter is Manager and one of the instructors. Lists instructors, prices, etc.
- 1.3.2 "Miss Ida Porter," publicity and program for travelling soprano, 8 pp, 3 copies.
- 1.3.3 Program for Porter's recital at Presbyterian Church (Paris, IL), 1 Apr 1897.
- 1.3.4 Publicity sheet for Porter's "Lecture Song Recital," 1897-98 season (address Fort Worth, TX plus permanent address in Bloomington), 3 copies.
- 1.3.5 Small brochure for Miss Ida Porter, soprano, Concert and Oratorio, n.d., 3 copies.

### **Other Books and Notebooks (Folders 4-7)**

#### Folder 4: Published music books

- 1.4.1 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition of Additional Exercises to Manual of Harmony by E.F. Richter, 1882
- 1.4.2 Children's Graded Singing Book in the Staff and Tonic Sol-fa notations, Book I, by E.H. Nourse, 1885.

#### Folder 5: Handwritten music instruction notebooks

- 1.5.1 Book with music lessons plus poetry in back, n.d., 92 pp.
- 1.5.2 Book with additional music lessons.

Folder 6: School Lessons (some reflect Porter as a teacher)

- 1.6.1 Notebook with lessons in many subjects for elementary school students, n.d.
- 1.6.2 Notebook journalizing daily teaching experiences, apparently while student teaching at Ben Funk School, n.d.
- 1.6.3 Notebook with chemistry lessons, n.d.
- 1.6.4 Notebook with physiology lessons, n.d.
- 1.6.5 Notebook with astronomy lessons, n.d.
- 1.6.6 Notebook with astronomy lessons, n.d.
- 1.6.7 Illustration of the Orders of Insects, reprint from the State Entomologist of Illinois, n.d., 9 pp.

Folder 7: French language handwritten notebooks

- 1.7.1 Notebook, n.d.
- 1.7.2 Segment of notebook, bound, n.d.

### **Miscellaneous (Folder 8)**

Folder 8: Miscellaneous

- 1.8.1 Used ink blotter advertising C.F. Shinkle, Books, Stationery, Watches, Jewelry, . . . etc., Normal, IL
- 1.8.2 Envelope from Mrs. H. B. Bull to Miss Ida Porter containing a letter of introduction for Porter to Mrs. Nellie Bangs Skelton of Chicago, 18 Sep 1890.
- 1.8.3 Concert Season of 1895-96 of Russian pianist Leopold Godowsky, 6 pp. Stamped for performance at Unitarian Church via Bloomington Amateur Music Club, 1 Dec 1896.
- 1.8.4 Menu from Chicago & Alton RR, Chicago Limited/St. Louis Limited, n.d.
- 1.8.5 Travelers Hotel Guide issue by the Hotel Credit Letter Company of NYC listing mostly Midwestern hotels, n.d.
- 1.8.6 Small, illustrated 8pp "Welcome Merry Christmas" booklet, n.d.
- 1.8.7 Annual booklet for Woman's Club, Bloomington, Illinois, 1912-13.