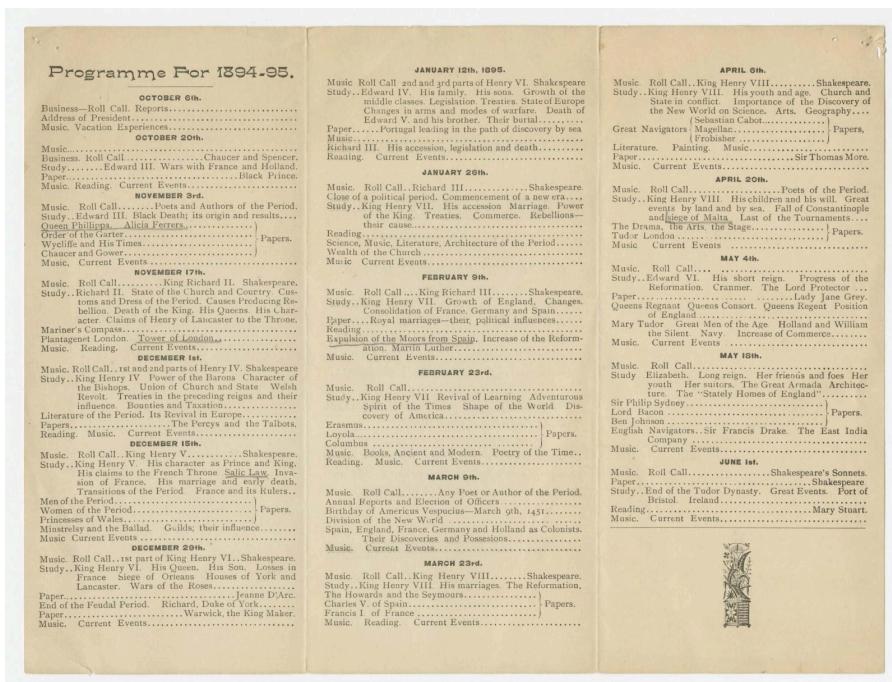
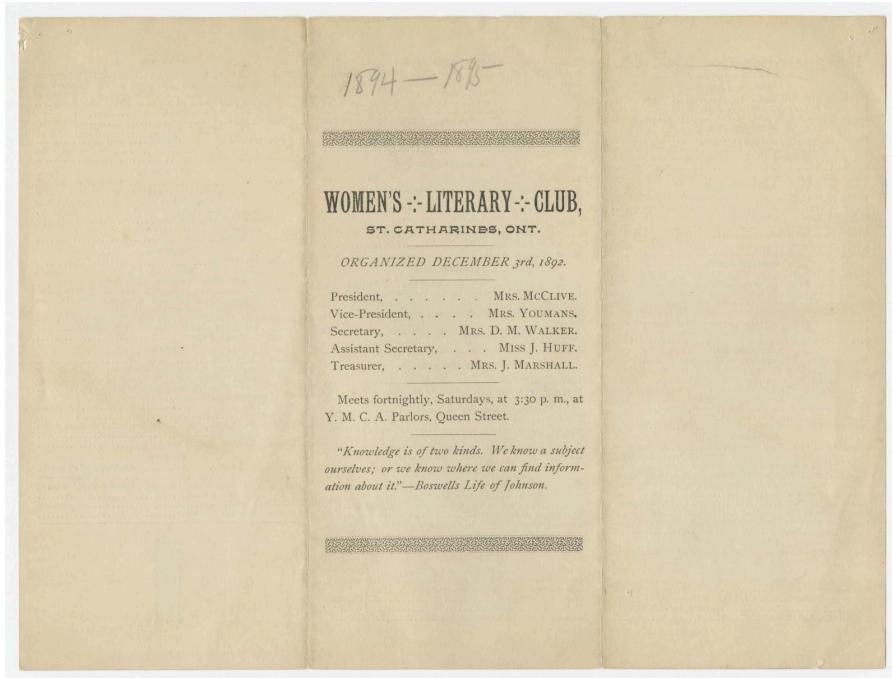


Women's Literary Club Programme 1894-1895. Women's Literary Club of St. Catharines
Fonds 1892-1996, n.d. (non-inclusive) RG 18

Researched by Mark Hallihan



This is the 1894/1895 programme from the St Catharines Women's Literary Club, part of the collection of the Brock Library & Special Collections (RG 18). It contains the detailed itinerary of readings and performances that were to happen on the provided dates from October 6th, 1894, till June 1st, 1895.

I chose this programme as a point of focus because of its design and use of fonts. In visual culture the way a document uses fonts can reveal a lot about its purpose and target audience.¹ In this case we can see fonts that look sharp, curved, and fine, this feels deliberate, elegant, and sophisticated..

The founder of the St. Catharines Women's Literary Club, Mrs. Currie, was a devoted learner and educator, using the club as an outlet to create a public space for education and to share her knowledge and interests with other women in the community.² There was a collective focus on both local and national history, classics, relevant events, and even musical performances.

The St. Catharines Women's Literary Club lasted approximately one hundred years and was a collective of women who adored studying history and literature. The members focused on literacy and their passion, as well as aiding the community, dedicating time to raise money for people and organizations in need.

Mrs. Currie also played an important role in honoring the late Laura Secord—she oversaw the publication of a book from which proceeds aided in erecting the Laura Secord monument in Queenston Heights.³ This passion of Currie's affected the entire state of the club. Continuing this passion and pursuit, the club went on to continue this legacy and provide scholarships in Mrs. Curries honor, called "Laura Secord's prestigious champion."⁴

These types of "women's clubs" were not just social gatherings; they were vital institutions that empowered women, fostered community, and laid significant frameworks for the women's suffrage movement.⁵ These clubs were a collective of women from different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, this was a space in which they could converse and discuss anything from politics, to gathering rallies, petitions and even education and self-improvement. The collective voice of women in these clubs helped influence lawmakers and public opinion.⁶ Their efforts contributed to the gradual recognition of women's rights, culminating in significant legislative changes in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They helped transform the landscape of women's rights and played a crucial role in advocating for equality.⁷

Notes

¹ [Ritz. “Typography in Design: The Art of Shaping Visual Communication.” Medium \(August 22, 2023\)](#)

² Mrs. M. Garnet Armstrong, *The First Eighty Years of the Women’s Literary Club of St. Catharines, 1892-1972*. St. Catharines, ON: Peninsula Press, 1976.

³ [Brock University Archives & Special Collections, “Laura Secord.” Women’s Literary Club of St. Catharines digital exhibition.](#)

⁴ Armstrong.

⁵ Linda Hughes, “A Club of Their Own: The ‘Literary Ladies,’ New Women Writers, and *Fin-de-Siècle* Authorship.” *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2007, pp. 233–60.

⁶ Linda D. Wilson, “Women’s Club Movement” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (Oklahoma Historical Society): <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=WO002>

⁷ Hughes.

References and Further Reading

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