

CONSORTIUM OF ACADEMIC & RESEARCH LIBRARIES IN ILLINOIS

BOOK DIGITIZATION PROJECT PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

FY 2009

PROJECT NAME: Illinois Culture and Heritage: Books written by Elizabeth Harrison (1849-1927)

CARLI MEMBER INSTITUTION: National-Louis University

PROPOSAL INFORMATION:

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Materials to be Digitized: 10 Books Written by Elizabeth Harrison

National-Louis University proposes to digitize 10 books written by Elizabeth Harrison between 1890 and 1922. These books range from early childhood development and psychology through the theory and practice of the kindergarten and other educational subjects, including a 1914 report for the U.S. Bureau of Education on her visit to Maria Montessori's school in Rome, to children's stories. The first of these, *A Study of Child Nature* (1890), appeared in more than 50 editions and eight translations into foreign languages in its first 50 years. Many were published by the Sigma Company in Chicago and St. Louis or the Chicago Kindergarten College, which Elizabeth Harrison established in 1891. Digitization of this collection will provide access to an important body of generally overlooked literature produced in Chicago that focuses on progressive educational ideas and the theory and practice of Kindergarten education at the turn of the 20th century. In addition, four of Harrison's books have already been digitized by the Internet Archive: *In Story-Land* (1895), *Two Children of the Foothills* (1900), *Kindergarten Building Gifts* (1903), and *Some Silent Teachers* (1903).

Relation to Illinois Heritage and Culture

Elizabeth Harrison (1849-1927) was a practitioner, theoretician, publicist, and political activist in the cause of kindergarten and early childhood education in late 19th- and early 20th-Century Chicago. Arriving in Chicago in 1879, Harrison studied with Alice Putnam (who opened the first private kindergarten in Chicago in 1874), then with Susan Blow (who opened the first public school kindergarten in the U.S. in 1873) in St. Louis, and with Maria Boelte (who studied with the widow of Friedrich Froebel, 1782-1852, founder of the kindergarten movement in Germany in the 1830s) in New York. Thus, within a few years Harrison had worked with the major figures in the nascent kindergarten movement in the United States. Beginning her teaching in the mid-1880s, from which National-Louis University traces its roots, in 1891 Harrison opened the Chicago Kindergarten College, one of the earliest private colleges in Chicago. Subsequently, her school evolved into the National Kindergarten College (1912), National Kindergarten and Elementary College (1917), National College of Education (1930) and National-Louis University (1990). In 1892 she was one of the founding members of the International Kindergarten Union and two years later organized the first national Mother's Convocation in Chicago, forerunner of the Parent and Teachers Association (PTA), which drew 1,200 attendees. Her early efforts were noted by the *New York Times*:

Chicago is the great educational kindergarten centre of the United States, with its three large training schools for kindergarten teachers. One of the first mothers' classes in the country was started there under the direction of Miss Elizabeth Harrison, who is so well known for her kindergarten work and writings. ("Teaching the Mothers / Brooklyn's Revolution in Kindergarten Methods," *NYT*, April 14, 1895)

Yet, Harrison is not widely recognized today for her pioneering contributions, compared to Jane Addams at Hull House and Frances Willard, president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, to the intellectual ferment and progressive drive in the educational and cultural life of Chicago at the turn of the 20th century. Instead, scholarship has focused on John Dewey, Francis Parker, and other men who fueled the fire of progressive education in Chicago, rather than on Harrison and the other women who laid the groundwork and kindled the flame fanned by

their (male) colleagues. In her posthumously published memoir, *Sketches along Life's Road* (which cannot be digitized at this time because it remains under copyright by its publisher), she summarized her philosophy thus: “[I]nformation is merely a tool, a most necessary tool, but never an end. The real end of education is individual growth and the right use of that growth is in the service of humanity.” Digitization of these books will contribute to a reassessment of Elizabeth Harrison’s contributions to early childhood education on the local, national, and international stage, and to the cultural heritage of Illinois.

Title	Publication Year	# of Volumes	Edition	Publisher	OCLC #	Checked OCA site yes/no
A study of child-nature: from the kindergarten standpoint	1891	1	1	Chicago: Chicago Kindergarten College	77080225	yes
The vision of Dante : a story for little children and a talk to their mothers	1894	1	1	Chicago: Chicago Kindergarten College	3910238	yes
Christmas-tide	1902	1	1	Chicago: Chicago Kindergarten College	26440830	yes
The Stone Cutter, A Japanese Legend	1906	1	1	Chicago: Central Publishing Co.	none	yes
Misunderstood children : sketches taken from life	1910	1	1	Chicago: Central Publishing Co.	4682238	yes
Offero, the giant : a Christmas-eve story	1912	1	1	Chicago : National Kindergarten College	5245255	yes
The Montessori Method and the Kindergarten	1914	1	1	Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office	9327641	yes
When children err : a book for young mothers	1916	1	1	Chicago: National Kindergarten College	3334374	yes
The legend of the Christ Child music : a music story for Christmas Eve ; adapted from the German	1916	1	1	Evanston, Ill.: National College of Education	26074538	yes
The unseen side of child life, for the guardians of young children	1922	1	1	New York: The Macmillan co.	3572719	yes