

PRESIDENT MARY LATIMER GAMBRELL COLLECTION
1966-1968

FINDING AID



Archives and Special Collections



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Accession Number: 99-10

Size: 0.8680 cu. ft.

Provenance: Hunter College Office of the President

Restrictions: None.

Location: Range 4 Side 3 Shelf 14

Archivist: Prof. Julio L. Hernandez-Delgado

Assistant: Mrs. Dane Guerrero

Date: May, 2011

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mary Latimer Gambrell was born on January 14, 1898, in Belton, South Carolina to Macie Amanda Latimer and Enoch Pepper Gambrell. Mary was educated at home and in Belton's public schools. In 1917, Mary received a B.A. from Greenville (S.C.) Women's College which later merged with Furman University. After receiving her B.A. degree Mary taught in the preparatory academy of the Women's College from 1918 to 1925. This was followed by a short stint at Belton High School where she taught history from 1927 to 1930.

Under the guidance of Professor Dixon Ryan Fox, Mary received an M.A. in history from Columbia University in 1931. Six years later she received her doctorate from the same institution. Mary's dissertation titled, "Ministerial Training in Eighteenth Century New England," was subsequently published in 1937 by Columbia University Press.

One of the first post graduate positions Dr. Gambrell accepted was at New Haven State College where she taught history from 1932 to 1937. One administrator recalled that as an individual Gambrell was forceful, pleasing, dignified, and charming. In addition, she was known to be efficient and highly organized. Mary quickly gained the respect of her colleagues and shortly thereafter assumed the post as department chair.

In 1937, Dr. Gambrell accepted an appointment as an instructor of history at Hunter College of the City of New York and remained in that position until 1944. Professor Gambrell's disposition as a determined and hard working professional paid off as she was promoted from assistant professor (1944 -1949) to associate professor (1949-1953) and finally to professor (1953 -1967). Former colleague Naomi C. Miller recalled that "after she joined the department of history in 1937, her overriding concern was to broaden and deepen the quality of education offered by the college and to secure for the faculty a determining voice in all academic matters."

Professor Gambrell served as department chair from 1948 to 1962. When John J. Meng became the president of Hunter College in 1960, she assumed the role of Dean of Faculties from 1961 to 1966. Professor Gambrell's defining moment came when she was inaugurated as president of Hunter College from February through July of 1967.

In her capacity as department chair, dean, acting president (1965, Spring 1966) and president, Mary Latimer Gambrell was instrumental in helping Hunter College adjust to the admission of male students; she lobbied for the expansion of space at the Park Avenue campus; assisted in the transformation of the Bronx campus to Lehman College; and arranged for a new School of Social Work building on 79th Street and Lexington Avenue.

Mary Latimer Gambrell retired from Hunter College in June of 1967 and died on August 19, 1974. Professor Miller fondly remembered that as president of Hunter College "hers was a commanding presence. Innate dignity and a sense of authority and purposefulness evoked immediate recognition of her high office. She set exacting standards for herself, and in their attainment she brought distinction to the college."

REFERENCES

“Mary L. Gambrell.” *Hunter Arrow*, April 12, 1965, p. 2.

Miller, Naomi. “Recent Deaths: Mary Latimer Gambrell.” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 80, No. 2 (April, 1975): 552 - 553.

Entry of Mary L. Gambrell in *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, Vol. 59, Clifton, N.J.: James T. White Company, 1980, pp. 34 - 37.

“Mary Latimer Gambrell.” *Dictionary of American Biography*, Supplement 9: 1971 - 1975, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1994.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The President Mary Latimer Gambrell Collection is rather small and, in a strange way, mimics her brief tenure as president of Hunter College of the City of New York from February through July of 1967. Despite the diminutive size of the collection, researchers will find two sets of folders to be of historic value. The first set corresponds to the separation of the main campus on Park Avenue and 68th Street from the former Hunter College in the Bronx (aka Bronx Campus) which eventually became Lehman College in 1968. Researchers will delight in learning about the issues and concerns that affected administrators and faculty over the separation of the main campus from the Bronx campus.

The second set of folders relates to the proposed expansion of the Park Avenue campus in 1967. The student body at the main campus on 68th Street and Park Avenue was growing and the availability of classrooms, lecture halls, and office space became an increasing concern for administrators, faculty, and support staff. President Gambrell's proposal to meet the challenge of a growing institution is addressed in the report "Expansion Program for Hunter College Park Avenue Center," February 1, 1967. Documents on the separation of Hunter College and on the expansion of the main campus should be of interest to researchers of higher education and to local historians.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series I – Biographical Information

Series I consists of articles and encyclopedic entries on Mary Latimer Gambrell including her vitae from 1951 and 1961.

Series II – Inauguration

Series II consists of general sources on the inauguration of Dr. Mary Latimer Gambrell as the seventh president of Hunter College of the City University of New York.

Series III – Hunter College

Series III consists of files that are associated with Dr. Gambrell's tenure as president of Hunter College. Key folders highlight the separation of the Hunter College campus in 1966 -1967, and the proposed expansion of Hunter College on Park Avenue in February of 1967.

Series IV – Photographs

Series IV consists of candid and portrait photographs of Gambrell as a private citizen, professor, and as president of Hunter College from February through July of 1967.

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES 1 – BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	1	“Mary L. Gambrell.” <i>Hunter Arrow</i> , April 12, 1965, p. 2. Miller, Naomi. “Recent Deaths: Mary Latimer Gambrell.” <i>The American Historical Review</i> Vol. 80, No. 2 (April, 1975): 552 - 553. Entry of Mary L. Gambrell in <i>The National Cyclopedia of American Biography</i> , Vol. 59, Clifton, N.J.: James T. White Company, 1980, pp. 34 - 37. “Mary Latimer Gambrell.” <i>Dictionary of American Biography</i> , Supplement 9: 1971-1975, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1994.
	2	Vitae, 1951, 1961

SERIES II - INAUGURATION

1	3	Investiture, February 15, 1967
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SERIES III – HUNTER COLLEGE

1	4	Addresses Gambrell, Mary L. “The Faculty in College Administration,” ca. December 1964. (draft) ---.“The Class of 1870,” delivered at Freshman Orientation in the Hunter College Assembly Hall, September 20, 1966. ---. “Christmas Assembly Greeting,” December 21, 1966. (draft) ---. Faculty Members Face an Expanding College,” n.d.
	5	Annual Reports of Academic Departments, 1966 - 1967
	6	Articles, 1961, 1966, 1970
	7	Capital Budget, 1968 - 1969

SERIES III – HUNTER COLLEGE

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
		Correspondence
		Incoming
1	8	March 1937 - May 1967
	9	June - December 1967
		Outgoing
	10	February 1948 - December 1966
	11	January - April 1967
2	1	May - June 1967
	2	July 1967 - January 1968
		Committee
		Expediting Committee
	3	Minutes, February - April 1967
	4	Dean of Faculty, 1962
		Campus Separation
	5	Park Avenue and Hunter College in the Bronx, 1966 - 1967
	6	Preliminary Campus Separation Survey Reports Academic Departments, 1967
	7	Administrative Offices, 1967
	8	List of Faculty Members Who will Teach in the Bronx in September 1967
	9	Expansion Program for Hunter College Park Avenue Center, Submitted by President Mary L. Gambrell, February 1, 1967
	10	<i>Ibid.</i> Submitted to Dr. Seymour C. Hyman, Vice Chancellor for Campus Planning and Development Board of Higher Education, June 2, 1967
	11	Hunter College Commencement, June 13, 1967
	12	Hunter College Student Social Community Religious Club Financial Records, 1966 -1967

SERIES III – HUNTER COLLEGE

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
3	1	Interview “The Time is Now,” An informal interview with President Mary Latimer Gambrell, n.d.
	2	Memoranda, 1966 -1967
	3	Miscellaneous Materials
	4	Obituary, 1974
		President’s Cabinet Meetings
	5	April 1966 - December 1966
	6	January 1967 - January 1968
	7	The President’s Report, 1966 -1967
		Publications
3	8	<i>Faculty and Staff News</i> , 1961, 1965 -1967
	9	Sara Delano Roosevelt Memorial House, December 1964 - January 1968
	10	Woman of the Year Award, 1967

SERIES IV – PHOTOGRAPHS

4	1	Investiture of President Mary L. Gambrell, February 15, 1967
	2	Commencement in Hunter College in the Bronx, ca. 1967
		Portraits
		Early career, n.d
		Informal, January 15, 1966
	3	Middle career, n.d.
	4	President of Hunter College, February - July 1967
	5	President’s Office
	6	Unidentified photographs