

VANDERBILT AID SOCIETY

MSS# 471

Arranged and described by Molly Dohrmann

Summer 2007

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
Jean and Alexander Heard Library
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Historical Note

On February 27, 1894, soon after James Kirkland became the second Chancellor of Vanderbilt, the first meeting of the Ladies Aid Society for Students of Vanderbilt University was held at the home of Mrs. Nathaniel Baxter on Spruce Street.(now 8th Avenue). Chancellor Kirkland had earlier proposed a women's auxiliary to help raise money for worthy students, who otherwise could not remain enrolled in the university, and the Ladies' Aid Society was the result. The first president of this organization was Mrs. Elizabeth Elliston, whose support of the Society lasted throughout her lifetime. By 1900 the name had changed to the Vanderbilt Aid Society by which it is still known today.

A quarter of a century after its founding in 1921 Mrs. E.W. Foster made this statement:

The purpose of the Society is to raise funds to assist needy and worthy students to complete their education at the University.

Aid is furnished by the Society to students as a loan and not as a gift; interest is charged on loans and someone personally interested in the student is required to indorse for him.

In nearly all instances loans are paid back sooner, or later and in some cases much more than the original amount has been returned to the fund.

If any test were needed the Vanderbilt Aid Society has abundant evidence of the value of its work in the words of appreciation from hundreds of young men and women who have been helped by its funds. Some of the best students of the University have been enabled to go through college only by virtue of assistance thus given.

In April of 1960 the Society's historian Aileen Bishop wrote concerning the purpose of the Vanderbilt Aid Society that it was not created "as a social club, but as a working organization to benefit the youth of our community."

More than 5,000 students have received loans from the fund for over 113 years.

Scope and Content Note

This small collection consists of 0.63 linear feet of materials relating to the founding of the Vanderbilt Aid Society, or the Ladies Aid Society for the Students of Vanderbilt University as it was called at the beginning. The collection contains correspondence, brief historical notes about the Society by various people connected with it, and the records that have been kept concerning the Treasurers' reports and the loan fund reports, as well as the minutes from the meetings, 1894 - 1950.

Box Listing

Box 1

- 1) Correspondence—October 14, 1932 - 1944
- 2) Correspondence—1945 - 1953
- 3) Correspondence—1954 - 1963
- 4) Report of Chancellor Kirkland; Constitution of the Ladies' Aid Society; Full report and history with testimonials from students aided; Constitution and By-Laws
- 5) Constitution and By-Laws and Revisions to 1960
- 6) Constitution and By-Laws, 1967 (Revised)
- 7) Financial records, 1894-1962
- 8) Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund Register—1924
- 9) Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund Reports—May 1, 1937 - Nov. 1, 1939
- 10) Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund Reports—May 1, 1940 - June 30, 1950
- 11) Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund Reports—July 1, 1950 - June 30, 1959
- 12) Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund Reports—July 1, 1959 - February 28, 1971
- 13) Report on the Vanderbilt Loan Funds, June 30, 1954
- 14) Correspondence—Vanderbilt Aid Loan Fund, 1960, 1962
- 15) Reports of the Treasurer, October 1937 - May 1, 1950
- 16) Reports of the Treasurer, 1943 - 1965
- 17) List of Students who received aid, 1935 - 1942
- 18) Membership List, 1954
- 19) List of homes in which the Vanderbilt Aid Society has met from 1894 - 1964
- 20) Invitations to meetings, 1961, 1962, 1963; List of hostesses for Vanderbilt Aid Tea, 1961, 1962
- 21) Notice of yearly meeting—April 27, 1970; May 7, 1974
- 22) Letter mailed to friends on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Vanderbilt Aid Society; Handwritten history
- 23) Brief History (1921) by Mrs. E. W. Foster, President of the Ladies' Aid Society of Vanderbilt; "Ladies Aid Society" in *History of Vanderbilt* by Edwin Mims (1946), pp. 253 - 254
- 24) Tributes to Mrs. Thomas J. Tyne; Mrs. Claude Waller given by Cornelia Keeble, October 20, 1943; Resignation of Mrs. Mary T. Orr
- 25) Article by Aileen Bishop (historian) "The Funding of the Vanderbilt Aid Society" April 6, 1960
- 26) "67 Years of Service: The Vanderbilt Aid" photocopy of an article from *Vanderbilt Alumnus*, March-April, 1961
- 27) Articles—"Tea and Money" *Vanderbilt Alumnus*/ Summer 1977, v.62, n.4, p. 40; "Aid Society Marks 113th year with Talk on its History" *Vanderbilt Register*, May 3, 2007
- 28) Application for Loan form
- 29) Minutes of the Vanderbilt Aid Society, 1894 - 1911

Box 2

- 1) Minutes of the Vanderbilt Aid Society, May 26, 1911 - 1927
- 2) Minutes of the Vanderbilt Aid Society, May 26, 1927 - May 10, 1950