

Guide to a Microfilm Edition of

The Ignatius Donnelly Papers

Helen McCann White

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This pamphlet and the microfilm edition of the Ignatius Donnelly Papers which it describes were made possible by a grant of funds from the National Historical Publications Commission to the Minnesota Historical Society.

Introduction

IGNATIUS DONNELLY was a man of richly varied talents who was associated with virtually every agrarian protest movement of his day. He reached Minnesota from his native state of Pennsylvania just in time to share generously in the economic adversity brought on by the panic of 1857. In his adopted state he dabbled for a time in townsite promotion and law before turning to antislavery politics. He joined the Republican party in pre-Civil War days when it was emerging as a radical movement. His steadily increasing penchant for political irregularity led him to break with the regular Republican organization and later to join forces with the Democrats. He reoriented the Granger movement into political channels and spearheaded its assault on the railroads. Midway in his career he was converted from hard-money economics to Greenbackism. He was at the forefront of the Anti-Monopoly party and the Farmers Alliance. He played an important role in the formation of the national People's party. He was undoubtedly Populism's greatest orator. On the stump he was at his best, searing his opponents with wit and ridicule or eulogizing his allies with extravagant praise.

Although politics remained his central interest, Donnelly's restless energy and varied gifts carried him into several careers. He was editor and publisher of newspapers in the vanguard of the agrarian crusade. Perhaps the most famous political document penned by Donnelly is the ringing preamble to the Populist platform of 1892, calling for social and economic reforms that would be taken into the mainstream of the nation's governing policies a generation later. A prolific writer, he published books on popular science and social protest. Among them are *Atlantis* and *Caesar's Column*, which have been reissued in modern editions. For almost half a century he attracted and charmed huge crowds at his lectures, speaking convincingly on a wide variety of subjects. He was an avowed Baconian, proclaiming from the platform and the printed page that the author of the works of Shakespeare was Francis Bacon.

The Ignatius Donnelly Papers comprise the most extensive collection on the Populist movement in existence. They illuminate the personality and times of this brilliant and unfailingly fascinating nineteenth-century reformer. The papers were selected by the Minnesota Historical Society as the second of its collections to be microfilmed under a grant of funds from the National Historical Publications Commission.

Without the dedicated efforts of many persons the preparation of this microfilm edition of the Donnelly Papers would not have been possible. Co-operation and support in all phases of the project have come from Robert H. Bahmer and Oliver W. Holmes, the commission's chairman and director, respectively, and from the latter's assistant, Fred Shelley. Lucile M. Kane, curator of manuscripts at the Minnesota Historical Society, and Thomas F. Deahl, former head of the society's public communications department, were codirectors of the project during the first year of its operation.

The greater part of the work was done under the direction of Helen McCann White, editor of the microfilm and author of this guide, who became project director at the end of 1966. Working under Mrs. White's able direction were Faustino J. Avaloz, head of the society's microrecording laboratory, who was in charge of developing and printing the film, Lawrence E. Bloom, microphotographer, and other full-time and part-time assistants: Maureen Leverty, Luther B. Thompson, Mary P. Lindeke, Marilyn Clancy, Dorothy Derifield, Constance J. Kadrmas, and Jane S. Davis. Volunteer workers who sorted, repaired, and mounted newspaper clippings were Betsy and Carolyn Gilman, Philip Hage, Bruce White, Mrs. George Becker, and Marie Woltman. Reference aid and secretarial help have been supplied by other departments of the society. Editorial assistance in preparing this guide for publication has been contributed by June D. Holmquist and other members of the society's publications department.

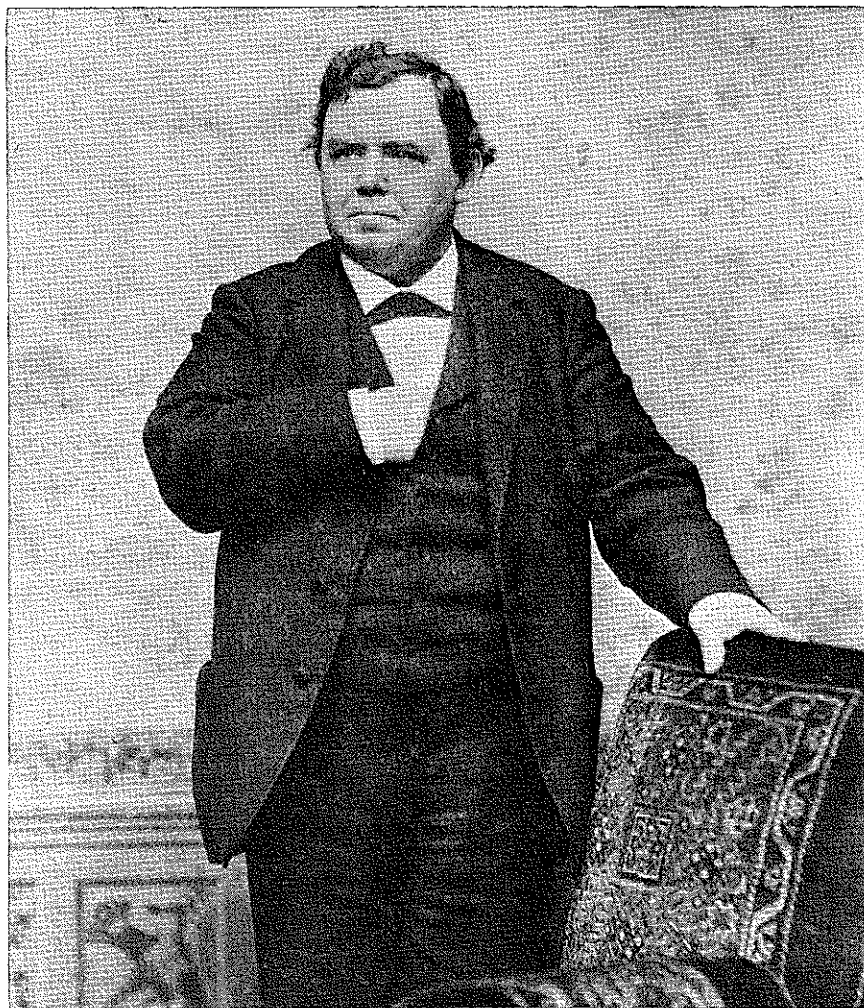
Marcella Beaulieu of the Minnesota State Archives Commission restored manuscripts that could not have been filmed without her attention. Philip C. Donnelly of St. Paul, Mrs. Trevor Bowen of New York City, and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin allowed copies of manuscripts in their possession to be included in this microfilm edition, and the St. Louis Public Library supplied photostats to replace newspapers in the collection that were too defective to be copied.

The society gratefully acknowledges the assistance of all these persons and organizations in making the Donnelly Papers available at reasonable cost to a nationwide audience.

RUSSELL W. FRIDLEY, Director
Minnesota Historical Society

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IGNATIUS DONNELLY (1831-1901). This photograph, taken by Charles Zimmerman of St. Paul sometime between 1873 and 1886, was presented to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1947 by Mrs. Henry L. (Marion O.) Woltman.

The Ignatius Donnelly Papers

THE PAPERS of Ignatius Donnelly in the Minnesota Historical Society are divided into four principal groups of material. Three of these, housed in the manuscripts department, are: (1) correspondence and miscellaneous papers (undated, 1812, and 1836-1943) — the bulk of which are in the period from 1854 to 1901; (2) literary materials; and (3) one hundred and thirty volumes, covering dates from 1847 to 1903. These three groups measure fifty-two linear feet, including approximately one foot of oversize items. A fourth group of materials, shelved in the library, comprise seventy-seven bound volumes of pamphlets.

The early papers largely concern Donnelly's life in Philadelphia as a student, lawyer, embryo poet, and officer of land and building associations. After 1856 they document his family life and career in Minnesota as a townsite promoter, lieutenant governor from 1859 to 1863, member of the United States House of Representatives from 1863 to 1869, and state legislator for various terms between 1873 and 1897; as editor and publisher of three newspapers; as a sometime Democratic, Republican, and third-party politician; as a popular orator and lecturer; as an unsuccessful candidate for many public offices, including that of vice-president of the United States in 1900; and as the author of books of popular science, novels of social protest, and works espousing the theory that Francis Bacon was the author of the writings attributed to William Shakespeare.

The Donnelly Papers are copied on one hundred and sixty-seven rolls of film, and contain, with a few exceptions, the full collection of papers in the possession of the society, as well as copies of letters from the collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and some items in private ownership. Correspondence and miscellaneous papers are found on Rolls 1-132; literary materials on Rolls 133-138; volumes on Rolls 139-163; and selected pages from the library pamphlets on Rolls 164-167. At the end of Roll 167, filmed as a supplement to the collection, are photocopies of items from a scrapbook in the possession of Mrs. Trevor (Katharine Giltinan) Bowen.

A brief general description of the papers appears on each microfilm roll. It is followed by a selected chronology of significant events in Donnelly's life; a list of sample citations to the papers; a roll note for each of the four groups of papers in the collection; and a list of the rolls in each of these groups.

In addition to these reference aids, the microfilm contains copies of catalog cards listing other manuscript collections in the society relating to Donnelly (Roll 163) and the library's holdings of printed works by and about Donnelly (Roll 167).

The 2-B film format has been used in microfilming the Donnelly Papers. A running title beneath each film frame gives the name of the institution and collection, roll and frame numbers, and the reduction ratio of the image. Other special targets indicate incomplete or defective manuscripts, enclosures, or other technical information helpful to the reader. Sometimes a manuscript was filmed more than once at different camera settings if the writing was faded or blurred. In this case a target indicating intentional duplication was used. Undated items appear on the film before dated ones, and a chronological order was followed whenever possible in the arrangement and filming of the papers within the separate groups. When an item found to be out of place was inserted into a film sequence, it was identified with frame numbers followed by a letter (as 163A).

This guide, designed to accompany the microfilm edition of the Donnelly Papers, provides biographical data on Donnelly, information on the Minnesota Historical Society's acquisition of the papers, and an analysis of the contents of the collection. It also includes an inventory of the microfilm rolls, a selected bibliography of manuscript and published sources on Donnelly, and a list of author and subject entries used by the society in cataloging the papers.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ignatius Loyola Donnelly, born November 3, 1831, in Moyamensing, a suburb of Philadelphia, was the third of seven children of Philip Carroll Donnelly, an emigrant from Fintona, County Tyrone, Ireland, and Catharine Gavin Donnelly, a second-generation Irish American. Donnelly's father, an itinerant peddler, small dry goods merchant, and pawnbroker, studied medicine in the 1830s at the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and received his medical degree there in 1839. Only two years later he contracted typhus from a patient and died when Ignatius was nine years old. Donnelly's mother continued to operate the family pawnshop after her husband's death.

Donnelly attended a neighborhood elementary school and then enrolled in Central High School, taking a classical course of study equal to that of many colleges of the day. He was graduated in July, 1849, but retained a connection with the school for several years thereafter through the alumni association and a literary club. Between 1849 and 1852 he studied law in the offices of Benjamin H. Brewster (later United States attorney general) and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1853. During the next four years he supplemented his small legal practice by acting as a consultant for a number of land and building associations, becoming an officer in these organizations. He began his political career in 1855 as an Independence Day orator at a Democratic gathering in Philadelphia. In the same year he sought the nomination for the state legislature on the Democratic ticket but withdrew his candidacy before the election.

In September, 1855, Donnelly married Katharine McCaffrey, an elementary school principal and a talented singer. The McCaffreys, like the Donnellys, were a family of small tradesmen of Irish ancestry and devout Roman Catholics.

Although Donnelly was a religious skeptic (he dropped his middle name, Loyola), religious differences caused no discord in his family life. Mrs. Donnelly and their children were practicing Catholics, and Donnelly maintained cordial relationships with Catholic and non-Catholic family members and friends throughout his life. Three Donnelly children grew to maturity: Ignatius C., who became a physician in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Butte, Montana; Mary, who married George Giltinan and settled in St. Paul; and Stanislaus J., who became a St. Paul attorney.

Shortly after his marriage Donnelly visited Iowa and Minnesota and became convinced that his future lay in the West. He helped to locate the townsite of Nininger on the Mississippi River some seventeen miles south of St. Paul and to organize an emigrant aid association, composed largely of Philadelphia friends and associates, for its settlement. Donnelly, his wife, and their infant son left Philadelphia for Minnesota in May, 1857, and at Nininger he built the house that was to be his home until his death in 1901.

In Minnesota the grandiose dreams of fame and fortune as a townsite promoter quickly faded during the financial depression of 1857, but Donnelly found a more satisfying career. He allied himself with the new Republican party and ran for election to the state legislature. He emerged from two unsuccessful campaigns for that office (1857, 1858) as a political speaker of unusual ability. Young, tireless, and eloquent, he won recognition that led to his nomination and election in 1859 as lieutenant governor.

During his two terms as lieutenant governor and presiding officer of the state senate (1859-63), Donnelly became known as a skilled parliamentarian. During Governor Alexander Ramsey's absence from the state at the beginning of the Civil War, Donnelly, as acting chief executive, issued a call for recruits in support of the Union cause and held chief responsibility for the efficient organizing and outfitting of the Minnesota regiments. He traveled with troops to the state's frontier area in 1862 to report on the uprising of the Sioux Indians.

He was elected to Congress in 1863 and re-elected for two additional terms (1863-69). Appointed to a select committee on Pacific railroads, he played an important role in the enactment of the Northern Pacific railroad bill. He supported land grants for the railroad; the extension of mails, telegraph communications, and wagon roads in the west; and the improvement of navigation. A radical Republican in his views on Reconstruction, he advocated a constitutional amendment to prohibit slavery, the establishment of a freedman's bureau, and economic as well as political equality for the Negro. He was concerned with the conduct of Indian affairs and launched an investigation of frauds in the Indian office. He also supported legislation to encourage tree-planting on the western plains, advocated the creation of a federal bureau to protect aliens and to encourage emigration from Europe, and introduced legislation to establish a federal bureau of education.

In the spring of 1868 a political feud led Congressman Elihu B. Washburne of Illinois to make slanderous remarks about Donnelly and prompted Donnelly to deliver a vituperative attack against Washburne on the floor of the House. Although Donnelly lost his bid for renomination to a fourth term in 1869, and

his attack on Washburne may have contributed to his defeat, a congressional investigation found no evidence to substantiate Washburne's charges.

In 1870 Donnelly went to Washington as a lobbyist for railroad interests. When he returned to Minnesota, he left politics for a time to prepare lectures on such subjects as Shakespeare, American wit and humor, and life in Washington, beginning the lecture career which took him to many states and brought him steady but modest financial returns for many years. But he was never far from the political arena. He helped to shape platforms and political strategy, ran for office himself, and campaigned for other office seekers in almost every Minnesota and national election during the next thirty years.

In 1873 he helped to establish a local chapter of the Patrons of Husbandry, the agricultural organization popularly known as the Grange. He became an official state Grange lecturer in the same year and published a series of lectures entitled *Facts for the Granges*. Although the group was dedicated to improving the lot of the farmers by nonpolitical means, Donnelly soon worked to organize a political arm, the short-lived Anti-Monopoly party. During the 1870s he edited and published a newspaper, the *Anti-Monopolist*, and served in the state legislature, where he championed reform legislation of various kinds. His interest in currency reform led him to join the Greenback Labor party and to attend its national convention in 1876, where he acted as temporary chairman and delivered the keynote speech.

In the hope of improving his own financial position, Donnelly in the 1870s acquired several thousand acres of prairie land in west-central Minnesota. With plans reminiscent of Nininger days, he brought relatives and friends into the project, encouraged the development of a little town that was named for him, purchased livestock and farm machinery, and prepared to go into large-scale farming. Plagued by grasshopper infestations, poor crops, and debts, Donnelly gave up his attempt at agricultural pioneering after several years. The experience, deepening his sympathy for farmers, made him increasingly critical of the economic and political system which did not come to their aid.

In 1878 Donnelly ran for Congress again in a bitter contest with William D. Washburn. The issues of this campaign centered on wheat pricing and grading and the power of Minneapolis millers. Donnelly lost the election, but irregularities in voting and evidence of fraud led him to contest the outcome and take the case to Congress. As the result of a shift in political control in the capital, the congressional investigating committee made no final judgment on the evidence presented. In the end Washburn retained his seat and the financial compensation awarded Donnelly did not cover the expenses of the suit.

Discouraged by defeats and financial reverses, Donnelly turned to writing. A man of his times, he shared the enthusiasms of the day for new frontiers of science, for the explorations of the world, and for the study of past civilizations. In his first book, *Atlantis*, he drew on scientific writings and a vast array of literary, religious, and legendary sources to assert that Plato's island of Atlantis actually existed, to trace the influence of its culture, and to explain what happened to it. His second book, *Ragnarok*, followed a similar formula, blending science and legend in support of a theory of the cometic origin of the earth's

sand, gravel, and clay. The popular success of his first two books encouraged Donnelly to begin in the early 1880s his most ambitious literary undertaking — a study of the plays of William Shakespeare in an attempt to find a cipher which would prove that Francis Bacon was the true author. Five years later he published the first results of his labors in *The Great Cryptogram*. He traveled to England to launch its publication there in the spring of 1888 and was hospitably received by prominent English Baconians. Although the book was neither a popular nor a financial success, it aroused much interest in the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy and brought Donnelly many invitations to lecture and debate on the subject.

In the meantime his political career continued. By 1884 he was associated with the Farmers Alliance, a nonpartisan political pressure group interested in agrarian reform, and he ran for Congress again, endorsed by the Alliance and the Democratic party. Although he lost the election, he ran well ahead of the Democratic ticket, but he hoped in vain for a federal appointment as surveyor general of Minnesota under the new national Democratic administration. He then turned his attention to the Minnesota legislature, where he lobbied for measures supported by the Farmers Alliance. In 1886 he was elected to the legislature with support from the Republican party, the Knights of Labor, and the Alliance.

Donnelly's independence in politics was well illustrated in 1888. After conducting a brief campaign for governor as a farmer-labor candidate, he withdrew from that race to support the Republican gubernatorial nominee, at the same time running for the legislature on the Democratic ticket. The Republican candidate for governor won with Donnelly's help, but Donnelly lost out in his own bid for the legislature. In 1889 he again competed unsuccessfully against William D. Washburn for election to the United States Senate.

In the next six years (1889-95) he served as lecturer and then president of the Farmers Alliance and helped to promote the Alliance insurance program. He was elected as an Alliance-Labor candidate to the legislature and served in the sessions of 1891 and 1893. During these terms he supported railroad regulation and antimonopoly legislation and took part in investigations of coal price fixing and illegal timber sales on state lands.

In the last decade of his life Donnelly was increasingly drawn into national third-party politics. In 1891 he attended a convention of farm, labor, and reform parties in Cincinnati, where he was chairman of the resolutions committee. As an orator and a member of the platform committees at subsequent conferences in St. Louis and Omaha, he exercised a significant influence on the formation of the People's party. In 1892 he was the unsuccessful People's party candidate for governor of Minnesota. He spoke out against the narrow sectarianism of the anti-Catholic American Protective Association, which grew rapidly during the depression of 1893.

During the 1890s, a newspaper and a series of novels and tracts of social protest brought Donnelly additional fame. The *Representative*, a newspaper which he began to publish in 1893, championed the reform program of the Farmers Alliance and the People's party. Other aspects of his thinking on the

economic, social, and political problems of his day are revealed in his books — *Caesar's Column*, *Dr. Huguet*, *The Golden Bottle*, and *The American People's Money* — all of which appeared during this decade.

Financial worries, the death of his wife, his waning influence in national party councils, and his disappointment that *The Cipher*, a second book on the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy, was not received with any public enthusiasm were factors contributing to his disillusionment during the last decade of his life.

Yet he remained active and contentious. He was again elected to the legislature in 1896. While there, he directed the Mountain Iron investigation of the alienation of state ore lands. He fought and won two legal suits against the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*; married his secretary, Marion O. Hanson, in 1898 despite the disapproval of his children; campaigned for the election of William Jennings Bryan; and continued to lecture on a variety of subjects.

His greatest public honor, his nomination in 1900 as the vice-presidential candidate of the People's party, came too late in life to afford him much satisfaction. He was sixty-nine years old, weary, and in poor health. With neither energy nor money to devote to the cause, he campaigned only halfheartedly and died two months after the election, on January 1, 1901, in his home at Nininger.

ORIGIN OF THE COLLECTION

In the 1890s the walnut-paneled library of the Ignatius Donnelly home at Nininger contained more than two thousand books, including copies of Donnelly's own publications and a comprehensive collection of references to the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. Also housed in the library were the scrap-books Donnelly had kept over the years and more than two hundred bundles of incoming letters, carefully folded and tied. Here too was a vast collection of pamphlets, government reports, and miscellaneous printed items. Many of these Donnelly had sorted and arranged for binding; it was quite a task, he wrote, for "they make a library in themselves."

In 1900 Donnelly selected six books from his library as a gift to the Minnesota Historical Society. Shortly after his death in 1901 the society received from his widow, Marion O. Donnelly, the nucleus of its collection of Donnelly Papers — twenty-five manuscripts, several volumes of early Minnesota newspapers, more than one hundred unbound pamphlets, and one scrapbook.

By 1908 Mrs. Donnelly had married Dr. Henry L. Woltman and left Nininger. The Donnelly home and its contents were at the mercy of time and the weather. But two men were interested in the historical collections in the old house. One of them was Dr. William W. Folwell, president emeritus of the University of Minnesota, who was then writing his four-volume history of Minnesota and who saw the records at the Donnelly home in 1905. The following year Folwell wrote that the papers "*should not be suffered to leave this state.*" Dr. Warren Upham, the secretary of the Minnesota Historical Society who had solicited the first gift of papers from Mrs. Donnelly, visited Nininger in 1906 and made a

preliminary inventory of the books and manuscripts in the library. Both he and Folwell appealed to the historical society to buy the collection from Mrs. Donnelly, but no action was taken.

The Donnelly collection remained in the library of the Nininger home until 1914. Mrs. Woltman then decided to give the society the bulk of the correspondence, the letter books, seventy-two volumes now classified as library pamphlets, bound and unbound files of newspapers, and eighteen scrapbooks. Specifically reserved from the gift were family letters "which have no reference to public affairs" and all the papers, books, and manuscripts relating to the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. In accepting the donation the society agreed to organize the manuscripts "so as to make them all serviceable to readers or special historical students." Arranged in 1915, the papers were almost immediately consulted by the first of the many scholars who have used them since that day. Under the direction of scholar-superintendent Solon J. Buck, the society expanded its collections to include the manuscripts of many of Donnelly's contemporaries.

Yet many valuable Donnelly records remained in the house at Nininger and in Mrs. Woltman's possession in St. Paul. From time to time she turned over diaries, memorandum books, scrapbooks, letter books, and financial records, but those papers that remained in the Donnelly home were neglected as the house fell into disrepair. In 1937 under the leadership of former Congressman Usher L. Burdick of North Dakota and two Minneapolis schoolteachers, the Ignatius Donnelly Memorial Association was organized to preserve the home and its contents. The association attempted to have the house and land designated a state park by the legislature, but repeated efforts in this direction ended in failure. Eventually the property was sold, and the house was torn down in 1949.

In the meantime the roof of the house had leaked, windows had been broken, and books and manuscripts had been scattered over the floor "in utmost confusion." Mrs. Woltman and officers of the historical society visited the house in the mid-forties and gathered up several boxes of papers and books which Mrs. Woltman gave to the society. Paneling from the library, Donnelly's desk, and some other pieces of furniture were presented to the society's museum. Many books went to the library of the University of Minnesota.

In 1953 Mrs. Woltman gave the society files of newspaper clippings, maps, eighty-five letters of a personal nature, Donnelly's high school diploma, and the earliest item in the collection, the patent application of 1812. The next year she donated a variety of the literary materials that had been reserved from the 1914 gift. Before Mrs. Woltman's death in 1964, the society purchased from her a number of autograph letters of famous persons. Other gifts and purchases have been added to the collection through the generosity of such men as Jefferson and Carl Jones and Floyd Risvold.

The most recent gift, incorporated into the microfilm edition as a supplement, includes photocopies of items from a scrapbook owned by Donnelly's granddaughter, Mrs. Trevor Bowen of New York City.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS

The undated correspondence and miscellaneous items at the beginning of the Donnelly Papers include letters and fragments of letters concerned with political affairs, the temperance movement, the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy, Donnelly's land and tenants, and family matters, as well as invitations and social cards. Printed items include clippings reflecting Donnelly's interest in American antiquities, Ireland, railroads, and politics; some recipes and household hints which were probably collected by Marion O. Donnelly; an engraving of John S. Hart, Donnelly's high school principal; a number of poems, some of them by Donnelly's sister, Eleanor C., and a sketch of her career as a Catholic poet.

The earliest dated item is an incomplete patent application (1812) of Erskine Hazard and Josiah White for a screw-cutting machine. The next item (1836), chiefly of autograph interest, is a letter from Daniel Webster to H. W. Kinsman. Other items of the 1830s relate to Donnelly's father, Dr. Philip C. Donnelly — an incomplete copy of his dissertation on croup presented to the Jefferson Medical College in 1839 and a few notes on his practice. Briefs (library pamphlets, vol. 77) and letters from Donnelly's mother and her attorney tell of the protracted litigation following Dr. Donnelly's bankruptcy.*

PHILADELPHIA DAYS

Donnelly's diploma from Central High School (1849), two notebooks (vols. 1, 2) for studies in English literature and German, and correspondence with fellow students document experiences of his high school days. The materials relating to his literary activities during this early period are described on page 20, below.

Donnelly studied law in the office of Benjamin H. Brewster and was admitted to the bar in 1853. There is biographical information about Brewster (vol. 99); occasional letters on personal and legal matters from him and from his brother Frederick C., onetime attorney general of Pennsylvania, are scattered through the papers. After his admission to the bar Donnelly practiced until 1856 in Philadelphia (vol. 3 contains his legal docket) and was active in the Union Land and Homestead Association, the Union Land and Homestead Building Association, the Workingman's Building Association, and the Union Land Hotel Company. Many financial records both in the volumes (79-82) and in the correspondence files document his association with these companies. Among his correspondents and business associates were Joseph Welsh; Samuel C. Kilpatrick, his brother-in-law; Lewis C. Cassidy, a fellow law student and later a prominent Philadelphia politician; George H. Burns, a high school classmate; Arthur M. Burton; David G. Barnitz; and John P. Persch, who was an officer in a number of similar associations and influential among the Germans of Philadelphia. Persch was later associated with Donnelly in the promotion of Nininger.

* The reader is reminded that the microfilm includes two series of numbered volumes. In this text, references to volumes in the library's collection of pamphlets (Rolls 164-167) are always identified as such; other references are to the volumes in the holdings of the manuscripts department (Rolls 139-163).

A clipping of Donnelly's 1855 Independence Day speech is in vol. 98; essay notes on a prohibitory liquor law probably written at this time are among the undated literary materials. These documents and some correspondence with John C. Breckinridge (1852, 1856-57) are among the meager items relating to Donnelly's political interests before 1859.

When Donnelly married Katharine McCaffrey in 1855, he extended his relationship to a wide circle of Irish-American families. Correspondence with the Donnellys, the McCaffreys, and their relatives begins in the 1850s and continues throughout his life. Some of Donnelly's activities during his Philadelphia days are revealed in the library pamphlets (vols. 1-3, 77). There are only scanty diary entries covering his life before 1856, but personal as well as business financial records are in the correspondence and in vols. 79-82.

EARLY NININGER DAYS

Correspondence, letter books (vols. 71-74), diaries (vols. 5-6), and a scrapbook (vol. 98) tell of the founding and promotion of the townsite of Nininger, a venture which Donnelly undertook in partnership with John Nininger. Nininger assumed responsibility for selling lots, while Donnelly returned to Philadelphia and there launched the work of advertising and promotion. He attempted to secure capital and to recruit laborers, craftsmen, and professional men as settlers. To make Nininger a model western town, Donnelly and his colleagues promoted the building of homes and the establishment of business concerns, a school, a literary society, and churches. They lobbied in the Minnesota legislature to charter the Nininger and St. Peter Western Railroad Company, for the designation of Nininger as the seat of Dakota County, and for an act to incorporate the town, which was passed in 1858. They attempted to recruit emigrants in Europe. Donnelly and Philip Rohr, editor of a German musical publication, established the *Emigrant Aid Journal*, published first in Philadelphia and later at Nininger. Alexander W. Macdonald of New York was hired as editor. The first issue of the *Journal* in English and German is in vol. 100.

More than one hundred houses were built in Nininger before the panic of 1857; thereafter foreclosures and bankruptcies caused the rapid decline of the town. No track was ever laid for the railroad, many of the buildings were moved to nearby Hastings, the newspaper soon discontinued publication, and eventually nothing was left in Nininger except the Donnelly home.

In June, 1857, Donnelly helped organize the Louisville Town Company, another speculative venture to bolster the fortunes of Nininger. The constitution, bylaws, and minutes in the correspondence files (1857, 1858) suggest that the company hoped to provide funds for building the Nininger and St. Peter Western Railroad and at the same time attract settlers to a site near Shakopee, a town in the Minnesota River Valley some thirty-five miles from Nininger. Associated with Donnelly in the venture were many of his Nininger colleagues and other easterners including James A. Ashley and A. Bernheimer.

Among Donnelly's correspondents in this period were his fellow investors and associates in the Nininger and Louisville ventures: John and Catherine

Ramsey Nininger; George O. Robertson, who moved to Nininger from New York City; Alexander W. Macdonald; Philip Rohr; Louis B. Faiver of Louisville, Ohio, the husband of Mrs. Donnelly's sister Mary; Lewis Govett and his brother, who were carpenters and builders; George B. Clitherall of North Carolina, a United States land agent in Minnesota; Samuel Arnold, George H. Burns, Edmund Byerly, Arthur M. Burton, and David G. Barnitz of Philadelphia; John W. Simonton and his brother of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and James R. Case and Charles E. Clarke of Ohio.

1859-1869

Donnelly's papers during his years as lieutenant governor and congressman are largely political. They include letters from Minnesota constituents commenting on issues of the day, expressing support for legislation, requesting appointment to positions in the land office, the Indian office, and other departments of state and federal government. Correspondents ask help in obtaining land patents, public documents, printing contracts, and seeds for planting. Writers include farmers, businessmen, educators, clergymen, newspapermen, railroad officials and promoters, fellow congressmen, and Minnesota senators and governors. In the correspondence files, diaries, and vols. 69 and 70 may be found lists of constituents of foreign nationalities and lists of those to whom documents and seeds were sent. Clippings of a series of letters that Donnelly addressed to foreign-born citizens are in vol. 98. The library pamphlets contain a large collection of government publications documenting Donnelly's congressional career and the issues of the time. Much of the correspondence reveals his concern with Reconstruction, education, Negro rights, Indian affairs, and railroads (see page 18, below). There are scattered references to Abraham Lincoln in the papers, but little in this period. Of unusual interest is Donnelly's estimate of the character of Lincoln which first appeared in the proceedings of the thirty-eighth Congress, first session, and which was reprinted in a newspaper (1901). Published reports relating to the assassination of Lincoln are among the library pamphlets (vol. 26). Biographical data on Lincoln enclosed in a letter from Jesse Fell to Donnelly (1874) should also be noted.

An important segment of correspondence relates to military matters. As acting governor of Minnesota when the Civil War broke out, Donnelly issued the call for volunteers for the state's first infantry regiment. A draft of this document is in the correspondence files (1861). In 1862 Donnelly reported to the governor on the Sioux Uprising. Newspaper clippings of the report are in vol. 98. Many letters concern the enrollment and outfitting of other regiments and local militia groups. Wartime correspondents requested commissions in regular and Negro regiments, described the various engagements in which Minnesota soldiers participated, and sought assistance in obtaining discharges and pensions. Among the writers were men who continued to be personal and political correspondents for many years. They include: Henry W. Lindergreen, a former Nininger printer; Christopher C. Andrews, lawyer, brigadier general, and consular official; James H. Baker, Joseph C. Whitney, Francis E. Collins, James Starkey, A. P. French,

Robert N. McLaren, Charles B. Jordan, Julian J. Kendall, James M. Bowler, T. H. Bassett, Samuel Mayall, J. E. Doughty, and Samuel E. Adams.

References to a number of other subjects and persons are of interest. In the correspondence files are Donnelly's speech on wagon roads (1864), a draft of a bill for the construction of wagon roads, and related letters from James L. Fisk (1864-66), and others about wagon roads and Fisk's expeditions to the Montana gold fields. Scattered letters from James Fergus (1861-66, 1883), who went to Montana with Fisk, concern politics, the gold region, and Fergus' claim to having originated the idea of a national park in the West. Fisk's report to the Dakota Land Company is in vol. 100, and circulars for his wagon trains and those of Captain Peter B. Davy are in the library pamphlets, vol. 65.

Letters from Frans H. Widstrand tell about his Farist Community (1862, 1866-68, 1870-73), a utopian experiment in Wright County, Minnesota. Harlan P. Hall corresponded about political matters and the affairs of a St. Paul newspaper with which he was associated. A few letters from Mrs. W. J. (Harriet Kress) Arnold concern poems she solicited from Donnelly for an anthology (1864, 1866). Donnelly also corresponded with Oliver H. Kelley (1867, 1869), founder of the Patrons of Husbandry, and with John P. Persch about financial speculations in which the two were associated. Letters from Philip Rohr (1863-64) tell of his life in Germany.

Thomas M. Newson, Thomas Clark, and others (1865) describe the Vermilion gold rush in Minnesota; Jane Grey Swisshelm discusses political and personal matters; Erskine Hazard (1864) writes of economic affairs; Schuyler Colfax (1863, 1867) of political matters. A letter (1868) from William H. Channing to Charles Sumner concerns the qualifications of C. W. Kleeberg, who wished to promote German emigration to the United States.

Family letters relate to life in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., and to affairs at Nininger. Correspondence with such persons as George H. Burns, George O. Robertson, Greenleaf Clark, Mr. and Mrs. John Nininger, Archibald M. Hayes, and David G. Barnitz concerns land, taxes, and legal matters.

At the end of the period, papers and other records document political feuds with William S. King and the brothers William D. Washburn and Elihu B. Washburne, and the end of Donnelly's congressional career.

1870-1879

Donnelly returned to Washington for a time in 1870. Correspondence and other records for that year tell of his activities there as a lobbyist for railroad interests (see page 18, below). He kept a scrapbook while in Washington (vol. 102) and described his impressions of life in the capital in a series of letters published in a St. Paul newspaper (vol. 101).

Early in the 1870s Donnelly began his career as a professional lecturer. Invitations to speak and drafts and notes of speeches are in the correspondence files. His diaries record lecture engagements and the fees he received for them. Clipped reports and notices of his speeches become more numerous in the scrapbooks of the period (vols. 99-105).

The bulk of the letters in these years, however, concerns his activities as a lecturer for the Patrons of Husbandry and his efforts to implement the Grange reform program. Donnelly's lectures entitled *Facts for the Granges* are in the library pamphlets (vol. 76) and other Grange data is in vol. 74. The correspondence contains the prospectus (1874) of the *Anti-Monopolist* and many letters and miscellaneous papers relating to its publication. Also documented is Donnelly's political activity during these years. He supported the Greenback Labor party, attending its national convention in 1876. He endorsed Horace Greeley's candidacy for president of the United States; there are a few letters from Greeley (1872, supplement). Letters and speeches show Donnelly's concern about tariff matters. His ideas on Greenbackism and currency reform are documented in correspondence with Joseph J. Goar, J. A. Noonan, editor of *Industrial Age*, and others. In addition there are letters from Ed A. Cramsie on activities of the Minneapolis Workingmen's Union; Samuel Leavitt (1875), J. H. Osborn, and J. C. Horey (1874) on co-operatives; and Montgomery Blair (1875) on national politics.

Beginning with the last months of 1875, personal correspondence, the diaries, and the journal tell the story of Donnelly's adventure in large-scale farming and the development of the town of Donnelly in Stevens County, Minnesota.

While Donnelly was a member of the Minnesota legislature between 1873 and 1878, he championed an investigation of timber sales on state lands and supported legislation to establish a state commissioner of agriculture with power to set standards of wheat grading. He favored the regulation of railroads and of insurance and interest rates, and the provision of free textbooks for public schools. All these matters are discussed in the correspondence.

The letter files document his unsuccessful congressional race in 1878 against William D. Washburn and reveal Donnelly's efforts in 1879 to collect evidence of fraud for presentation to a House committee investigating the election.

1880-1889

The hearing on Donnelly's charges of fraud in the 1878 election came before the House committee on elections at the end of 1879. The case was very nearly won for Donnelly when a controversial letter was delivered to the committee's chairman. In the complicated proceedings that followed, the letter was used as evidence by parties on both sides of the dispute. Printed testimony is in the library pamphlets (vol. 69), and the 1880 correspondence includes a copy of the controversial letter and letters from James Starkey, George W. Julian, a former congressman who acted as Donnelly's counsel, and others concerned with the hearing.

The political campaign of 1884, in which Donnelly participated, brought a Democratic triumph and the election of Grover Cleveland. The papers document the campaign and Donnelly's narrow defeat, and correspondence with such men as William F. and Edward P. Vilas reveals his vain attempt to win a political appointment as surveyor general of Minnesota.

Donnelly ran for office again in the fall of 1886 and was elected to the legisla-

ture. Clippings in one of the scrapbooks (vol. 107) record most of the events and issues of the 1887 legislative session. Among correspondence of legislative and political interest are letters about temperance and his activity in organizing a block of legislators in support of farm programs.

At the end of the decade (1889) Donnelly became a lecturer for the Farmers Alliance. Many of his political correspondents at this time were persons who had participated in the earlier agrarian protest groups of the Anti-Monopoly and Greenback Labor parties. With Donnelly they moved into the Farmers Alliance and People's party organizations. Scrapbooks (vols. 105-108) are largely clipping files on political topics of the decade.

The most significant events in this period of Donnelly's life were literary rather than political, however. There is much correspondence about the publication of his books, *Atlantis*, *Ragnarok*, and *The Great Cryptogram*, and about the ideas they set forth (see pages 20-23, below). Some letters from famous persons are merely acknowledgments of complimentary copies of the books, but others are more substantial.

The many requests for speeches and interviews testify to Donnelly's growing popularity as a lecturer. He corresponded with journalists Antoinette V. Wakeman (1886, 1887) and Sarah Cahill Worthington (1881, 1887), who interviewed him for Chicago newspapers. Edgar L. Wakeman (1883-84), who launched a literary publication, *The Current*, asked Donnelly for contributions. Information in a scrapbook (vol. 126) and diaries tells of Donnelly's participation (1889) in an excursion of the Wisconsin Press Association.

In the fall of 1887 when Donnelly was trying to finish the manuscript of *The Great Cryptogram*, he hired John A. Giltinan to help him answer a great accumulation of correspondence. Attached to many letters in the correspondence files for this period are drafts of answers in Giltinan's handwriting. It was probably at this time that Giltinan helped Donnelly select excerpts from his diaries and other writings for the book entitled *Donnelliana*.

Much personal correspondence in these years concerns the health of members of the family, the marriages of Mary and Stanislaus and the births of their children; the professional practice of both sons and Donnelly's attempts to find positions for them; the studies of Ignatius, Jr., in Philadelphia, London, and Vienna; Donnelly's trips to Washington, and to Europe in 1888. Letters, bills, and accounts give information on Donnelly's financial difficulties, particularly in the farming operations in Stevens County, and there is material on a protracted series of lawsuits which originated over the purchase of farm machinery from the McCormick Harvester Company. There is also correspondence about Willard Glazier's claim to being the discoverer of the source of the Mississippi River. Other information on the latter subject is in the library pamphlets (vol. 72).

1890-1900

Donnelly served as president of the Minnesota Farmers Alliance between 1890 and 1894. As a prominent Alliance spokesman, he participated in national conventions of the farm, labor, and reform groups which in 1892 formed the

People's party, and he was that party's candidate for governor of Minnesota in 1892 and for vice-president of the United States in 1900. The correspondence of the period is chiefly concerned with Alliance and People's party matters and with political affairs on both state and national levels. As lecturer and president of the Alliance in the period before 1895, Donnelly corresponded with so many state and local organization men that it is impossible to list them all. Among the most frequent writers were John Allison, Hamlin V. Poore, M. L. Snow, Henry L. Loucks, and such long-time friends and correspondents as William W. Mayo, Patrick H. Rahilly, Thomas Foster, and James M. Bowler. Donnelly spoke at county meetings throughout the state, helping to organize new Alliance chapters. He was also interested in promoting Alliance-sponsored hail and cyclone insurance programs.

Among the national leaders with whom he corresponded in the 1890s were Herman E. Taubeneck of Illinois, national chairman of the People's party; Robert Schilling, a Wisconsin labor leader; Davis H. Waite, governor of Colorado; Luman H. Weller, farm editor and former congressman from Iowa; J. C. Manning of Birmingham, Alabama; N. H. Motsinger of Shoals, Indiana; John C. Hanley, state and national Alliance organizer, business agent, and lecturer; James J. Ferriss, an official of the National Reform Press Association; Terence V. Powderly, leader in the Knights of Labor; Wharton Barker of Pennsylvania, presidential candidate of the People's party; Jo A. Parker, Louisville, Kentucky, chairman of the national executive committee of the People's party; Paul Van Dervoort, Omaha, Nebraska; Marion Butler, senator from North Carolina and chairman of the People's party national executive committee (1896-1904); and Thomas E. Watson, Atlanta, Georgia, newspaperman and vice-presidential candidate.

The papers also contain a few letters from, and information about, three colorful women of the reform movement: Mary Elizabeth Lease of Kansas, who lectured in Minnesota for the People's party and on whose behalf the *Representative* collected money; Eva MacDonald (Valesh), a young Alliance organizer; and Henrietta Vinton Davis, a Negro dramatic reader who wanted to participate in the 1892 People's party campaign (see page 18, below).

A number of other matters are treated in the correspondence. Letters from such persons as Henry Demarest Lloyd, Davis H. Waite, and E. G. Brice (1896), who claimed to have discovered how to make gold from other metals, reveal Donnelly's interest in currency reform. Speech notes and correspondence in 1894 show his concern about the anti-Catholic and anti-foreign activities of the American Protective Association. Details of utopian communities are contained in letters from Isaac Broome (1892) about Albert K. Owen's colony in Mexico and from a number of persons about the Ruskin Colony in Tennessee (1895, 1899), and there are copies of the articles of association for a grain growers' co-operative (1898).

Donnelly began to publish his newspaper, the *Representative*, in 1893 to present the views of the Farmers Alliance and People's party. Letters from the paper's editors and business managers—Robert Eckford, A. L. Stoughton,

Peter J. Seberger, and E. A. Twitchell among others — reflect the problems of editing and publishing. There is correspondence with subscribers and advertisers and files of what appear to be subscription lists covering most of the years of the paper's existence. Some letters from Samuel Hill, railroad official and Minneapolis banker, concern advertising in the paper. The *Representative* daybook is vol. 88. Vols. 76 and 77 contain Farmers Alliance letters sent; other copies of letters sent are filed with the correspondence. Vols. 113 and 114 are Farmers Alliance scrapbooks. Other Alliance data may be found in the library pamphlets (vols. 74, 76) and in letters from Everett W. Fish, who published *The Great West*.

Requests for endorsement for public office, political activities, and legislative issues are subjects of correspondence during Donnelly's campaigns and his service in the legislatures of 1891, 1893, and 1897. Letters from George W. Day, among others in 1893, relate to the investigation of the sale of state pinelands. There is also information about the investigation of coal price fixing which Donnelly initiated in the same year. In 1897 letters and testimony concern the Mountain Iron investigation, of which Donnelly was chairman, a legislative inquiry into the sale of mineral lands in northern Minnesota.

There are reviews and correspondence with publishers and readers of the seven books published by Donnelly in this decade: *Caesar's Column* (1890), *Dr. Huguot* (1891), *Donnelliana* and *The Golden Bottle* (1892), *In Memoriam* and *The American People's Money* (1895), and *The Cipher* (1898). (See page 23, below.) In the correspondence too are requests for lectures and debates on subjects related to the books. Letters from outside the state, particularly from Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, the Dakotas, and Wisconsin, indicate that he was much in demand for political as well as literary speeches.

Matters of concern in the personal correspondence of the 1890s are Katharine Donnelly's death (1894); the death of Donnelly's son-in-law, George Giltinan; the marriage of Ignatius, Jr., (1897) and his removal to Montana; Donnelly's second marriage to Marion O. Hanson and his children's unhappiness about it. There are a few letters from Donnelly's granddaughter, Katharine Giltinan.

The correspondence includes some information about three legal disputes: two libel suits against the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* (1891, 1897), and a suit brought against Donnelly by R. S. Peale over royalties for *The Great Cryptogram* which dragged on for several years. Donnelly's rather skeptical report of "A Week with the Ghosts" (1897), some correspondence with Marie J. Dempsey and others (1898-1900), and notes on Donnelly's speeches on life after death (1899) concern his interest in spiritualism and experiments with the speaking dial, a kind of ouija board.

Several letters in this period from a number of famous persons are worth noting. They include Edward Bellamy (1893); Claude G. Bowers, the historian, then a student (1896); William J. Bryan (1895, 1896); Eugene V. Debs (1898, 1899); Joseph Jefferson, the Shakespearean actor (1892); James Whitcomb Riley (1891); James B. Weaver (1881, 1895); and Frances E. Willard (1891-92, and vol. 130).

The few papers in the collection for the years after 1900 include letters concerning Donnelly's death, obituary notices, and correspondence with Mary D. Giltinan, Stanislaus Donnelly, and Mrs. Donnelly's attorney about settling the Donnelly estate. There is also correspondence with Warren Upham revealing the Minnesota Historical Society's interest in Donnelly's papers, and inventories of the contents of his library (1909). Letters from some of Mrs. Donnelly's friends include those of Samuel W. Williams, an attorney of Vincennes, Indiana, who was a People's party leader. Also worthy of mention are letters from members of the Ignatius Donnelly Memorial Association and a clipping (1943) about Donnelly's part in sponsoring the first federal bureau of education.

SUBJECTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Social Life and Customs

The social life of the Donnellys and their circle of friends and relatives is revealed in the personal correspondence of Donnelly, his first wife, and their children; Donnelly's mother; his brother John G.; Donnelly's sisters, Sarah T., Elizabeth A., Eleanor C., Philipanna, and Agnes H. (Mrs. Samuel Kilpatrick) and her family. The letters describe daily life in Philadelphia and Minnesota, domestic problems, Catholic church activities, attendance at musical and theatrical performances, and holidays and vacations at mountain or seaside resorts (especially at Cape May, New Jersey). There is similar correspondence with Mrs. Donnelly's relatives: the McCaffreys, Schools, Giltinans, Ferrises, O'Bryans (O'Briens), Faivers, and Engels, and from such friends in Minnesota as the William L. Bannings and John S. Princes. Correspondence, diaries, and financial records also contain many household accounts.

More broadly, the papers are a source of data on many other aspects of nineteenth-century life. There are letterheads of business firms which advertised in Donnelly's newspapers and circulars describing their products. There is correspondence with newspaper editors and publishers, local businessmen, lawyers, politicians, and citizens from all walks of life. Donnelly's diaries and his journal give colorful impressions of the hotels and towns where he stayed and the people he met on his many lecture and campaign tours, both in Minnesota and in other areas.

Health and Medicine

Much information about illnesses, epidemics, medical treatment, and surgical operations is contained in the family letters. A few items in the correspondence of the 1830s relate to Dr. Philip C. Donnelly's studies at Jefferson Medical College and to his practice. Letters from Dr. Ignatius C. Donnelly tell of his studies at the same college in the 1880s, of his educational experiences in London and Vienna, and his practice in St. Paul. A few letters concern Donnelly's subsequent attempt to find a position for his son. Letters from Dr. Chester G. Higbee (1886) and J. E. Doughty (1882) tell of treatment in hospitals for the insane, and one

from J. C. Dicky (1895) proposes a legislative bill to guard against unreasonable charges in surgery. Of unusual interest is a letter (1888) from Dr. Ignatius Donnelly in London telling of an operation for the removal of his eye.

Education

Donnelly's interest in education is evident in the earliest years of his career. Speeches and notes for speeches on the subject (1853, 1867, and 1890) are worthy of mention. Letters from his sisters tell of their experiences as Philadelphia schoolteachers. The library pamphlets (vols. 1-3, 65, 77) contain printed reports about Central High School, the Philadelphia school system, and schools in Georgetown, D.C., which the Donnelly children attended for a short time in the 1860s. There are also letters concerning the school at Nininger and correspondence with Stanislaus, a student at St. John's Seminary, Collegeville, Minnesota, (1877-78), where one of his classmates was Ignatius-Hole-in-the-Day, son of a Chippewa Indian chief.

Sponsorship of the bill creating the first federal bureau of education (1866-67) was an achievement of Donnelly's congressional career. His association with James A. Garfield in this project is revealed in a few brief notes from Garfield; in the same period there are a few letters from such educators as John S. Hart, Henry Barnard, James P. Wickersham, and the Reverend John Mattocks (1866-67). A clipping from *The Pathfinder* (1943) gives a more recent evaluation of this legislation.

Much information about Donnelly's activities in support of free textbooks for the public schools of Minnesota is contained in the papers, particularly in the correspondence (1877-78) and in the library pamphlets (vol. 76). There is correspondence on the subject with Daniel D. Merrill, William F. Phelps, and many others.

Racial and Nationality Groups

The papers reflect Donnelly's pride in his Irish ancestry and his sympathy for the various European nationality groups that settled the United States. There is much information on the Irish in America, not only on the families to which Donnelly was related, but also on celebrations—particularly St. Patrick's Day festivities, interest in independence for Ireland, colonization and emigrant groups, publications, temperance groups, and Irish influence in political affairs. Donnelly's research on Ireland and the Irish people among the literary materials includes letters, clippings, and genealogical notes on Irish families. There is much correspondence through the years with relatives in Ireland and a few letters from Donnellys in Mexico, Canada, and Australia.

The influence of the Germans and Scandinavians in Minnesota politics is also documented in many places in the papers. There are only scattered references to the Jews, but Donnelly's appreciation of their role in American life is stated in a letter to Emma Lazarus (1885).

His activity in the Emigrant Aid Association, speeches (1855, 1864), a series of letters to the foreign-born voters of Minnesota (1859), and his sponsorship

of a bill for the creation of a federal bureau of immigration, all reveal his concern for the foreign-born immigrant and citizen.

Donnelly's interest in the American Negro is revealed chiefly in the papers of the 1860s relating to his congressional career, in the Reconstruction legislation he advocated at the end of the war, and in his book *Dr. Huguet*. Letters of the war period concern applications for appointment to Negro regiments, and some letters and reviews of *Dr. Huguet* are in the correspondence files in the months following its publication. Of special interest are a circular containing testimonials about Henrietta Vinton Davis (vol. 115) and a letter (1892) from her.

There is scattered material about American Indians in the collection. In the 1860s Donnelly was concerned particularly with an investigation into the Indian office's conduct of Chippewa affairs (1864) and the sale of Sioux lands in Minnesota (1867-68). There is correspondence about Indian matters with such men as Joseph R. Brown, Bishops Henry B. Whipple and Thomas Grace, James W. Lynd, Edwin Clark, Frederick B. Ayer, and others. A curious article by Donnelly in 1873, which apparently never was published, describes an imaginary appearance of Sioux Indians in Washington. In the 1880s Donnelly corresponded with various persons about Indian history, legends, language, and artifacts, and their significance to the theory of Atlantis. A few letters are especially noteworthy: Dr. Washington Matthews (1888) on the Navajo; Professor Andrew W. Williamson (1882) on the Sioux; and M. S. Littlefield (1883) on the Oneida.

Railroads

Soon after he came to Minnesota, Donnelly lobbied for a legislative act to incorporate the Nininger and St. Peter Western Railroad (vol. 100). In Congress, as a member of the House committee on Pacific railroads, he played an active role in the chartering of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company (1864); and after his defeat for re-election he served for a time (1870) as a railroad lobbyist in Washington. Railroad issues were important to him in these years and in many of the political campaigns of the next thirty years. Correspondence, clippings, and pamphlets scattered throughout the collection reveal his interest in railroad building and financing, land grants, freight rates, and government regulation. Clippings about railroad matters are found in most of the scrapbooks, beginning with the earliest ones which contain James W. Taylor's ideas on railroad and northwestern expansionism (vol. 100). The library pamphlets contain a large number of speeches and pamphlets about railroads, and through the years Donnelly corresponded with many persons on railroad matters — both on broad issues and on such minor ones as requests for jobs and passes for members of his family.

Among these correspondents were: Oakes Ames, James A. Ashley, Rufus J. Baldwin, William L. Banning, George L. Becker, Selah Chamberlain, Jay Cooke, Francis R. Delano, Elias F. Drake, John C. Frémont (1871), Samuel Hill, Robert H. Lamborn, William C. Le Duc, Electus B. Litchfield, Sidney Luce, Luke Marvin, Dr. William Schmoele, Thaddeus Stevens (1868), Henry Villard (1883), and many others.

Donnelly the Speechmaker

The activities of Donnelly as orator and speechmaker are represented in the correspondence, scrapbooks, and library pamphlets, which contain manuscripts of speeches, notes, clippings, and reports of speeches delivered between 1855 and 1900 in Minnesota and outside the state, particularly in Wisconsin, the Dakotas, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. Speeches on a wide range of political and literary subjects include those on the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy, Atlantis, prehistoric man, geology, solar energy, American humorists, and wit and humor (vol. 9 contains a collection of jokes and stories used in political speeches of the 1860s). There are also speeches or reports of speeches on education, life in Washington, spiritualism, Robert Burns, the tariff, agricultural subjects, civil service reform, Reconstruction, immigration, Civil War leaders, and the Red River Rebellion. Many subjects illustrate Donnelly's concern for reforms which would ensure the farmer and laborer an equitable share in the economic benefits of American life. A number of interesting speeches on patriotic themes were delivered throughout the years on St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.

Evidence of his popularity as an orator appears in the many requests from officials of agricultural societies, county fairs, lyceums, chautauquas, schools, colleges, and library associations, as well as from leaders in local, state, and national politics.

Agriculture

In addition to the mass of material on agricultural reform movements in the last half of the nineteenth century—the Patrons of Husbandry, the Farmers Alliance, and the People's party—the collection contains detailed information both in family letters and in financial records of day-to-day farm life at Nininger, in Stevens County (1870s, 1880s), and throughout the state in the comments of many other letter writers. There is data on crops, weather conditions, marketing, grasshopper plagues, livestock, farm machinery, labor, and many other subjects, giving a remarkably full picture of the pleasures and perils of rural life in Minnesota. Among Donnelly's correspondents were such men as Oliver Dalrymple, a large-scale farmer in the Red River Valley; Peter M. Gideon, the imaginative horticulturist who developed the Wealthy apple; Oliver Gibbs, Jr., newspaperman and officer of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society; Isaac M. Westfall, breeder of pedigreed stock; and Harry H. Young, editor of agricultural publications.

Related to Donnelly's agricultural concerns was his interest in forests and forestry. Library pamphlets (vols. 72, 77) contain material on this topic, gathered to support Donnelly's sponsorship of a bill for tree-planting on the western plains. Donnelly encouraged tree-planting through contests in the *Anti-Monopolist*, and spearheaded legislative investigations (1874, 1893) of illegal sales of timberlands. He corresponded with Joseph O. Barrett and with Leonard B. Hodges, the author of *Forest Tree Planters Manual*, who promoted tree-planting on railroad rights of way and who was an officer, with Donnelly, in the Minnesota

State Forestry Association (1878). There is also correspondence in 1891 regarding forestry bills in the Minnesota legislature.

Literary Career

A few of Donnelly's early poems were published in literary magazines of the day. In 1850 he published at his own expense *The Mourner's Vision* (library pamphlets, vol. 77) and solicited criticism from poets Oliver Wendell Holmes and Edith May. Their letters, other letters from Holmes (1859-60), and Annie Brewster's review of the book are in the correspondence. An interest in antiquities led him to investigate (1849) the ruins of Fort Gripsholm, an early Swedish fortification in Pennsylvania, and to write a historical essay on it. He also tried his hand at short stories and wrote essays on law students, marriage, and other subjects.

Donnelly was a member and for a time secretary of the Philadelphia Institute of Literature, the constitution and other records of which are in the correspondence (1851). He was associated with other young alumni of Central High School as a writer for and editor of *The Minute Book* (vol. 98). In addition to his own literary productions of this period, the papers include a poem by Joseph Janvier Woodward (1850), later a medical officer in the United States Army, describing Donnelly and other literary friends, and a few writings and letters of Samuel S. Fisher, who later practiced law in Ohio and who was a commissioner of the United States Patent Office. There is correspondence too with classmates and literary club associates such as Joseph A. Leonard, later a lawyer, doctor, journalist, and consular official. Correspondence with Abraham Sink and John T. Greble concerns school days, experiences after graduation, and Greble's life (1850-53) as a cadet at West Point. A note on Sink's death (1851) and a poem in his honor are in vol. 99. Also present are poems to Greble's sister, and correspondence and a poem concerning his death (1861) as the first Union officer killed in the Civil War.

In later life Donnelly continued to write poems on festive occasions but he did not attempt to publish them. He did, however, encourage his younger sister Eleanor. Many clippings of her poems on religious themes appear in the correspondence files and in vols. 99 and 126.

The literary efforts of Donnelly and his circle are found in the correspondence, in the literary materials, in the volumes (particularly vol. 98), and in the library pamphlets (vol. 77).

Atlantis and Ragnarok

In the 1850s and 1860s Donnelly found time to be curious about Indian mounds, the ancient history of North America, and geology. Though he made speeches on these subjects and collected items from magazines and newspapers, he had little time for writing. After his political defeat in 1868, he turned to lecturing on literary as well as political subjects. Interested in the theory of evolution, he wrote to Charles Darwin, from whom he received two replies (1873, 1882). Special issues of the *New York Tribune* (1875) in the correspond-

ence are also evidence of his interest in science. Two books of popular science resulted from Donnelly's investigations of the world of nature.

His curiosity about Plato's Atlantis led to a far-ranging study of language, legends, and prehistoric life, and a survey of everything in print relating to the fabled island. His book, *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, written in 1881 and published early in 1882 by Harper and Brothers, attempted to prove that the island had existed in the Atlantic Ocean and that it had supported a rich and powerful civilization until it sank during a terrible cataclysm.

The book was at once a popular and financial success. In 1883 the New Orleans Mardi Gras and the Baltimore Oriole Festival adopted Atlantis themes, and in 1886 Donnelly was dubbed Duke of Atlantis in the St. Paul winter carnival (vol. 50). By 1884 the book had gone through seven editions; many more were published during Donnelly's lifetime and afterward. The sermons of William J. Colville (library pamphlets, vol. 76) illustrate the interest of clergymen in the book. From the time of its publication until his death, Donnelly received letters about Atlantis, many of them offering evidence in support of the thesis, others expressing the enthusiasm inspired by his attempt to tie together in one book so much of science, religion, and prehistory.

Among the many letters about *Atlantis* are those from William E. Gladstone, prime minister of England; François Lenormant, a French historian whom Donnelly quoted in the book; Thomas Butler Gunn, English journalist and author; Lorenzo Yates, naturalist (1883, 1887); Morris Goldwater, a Prescott, Arizona, businessman; C. W. Kempton, an Arizona mining engineer; Arthur Gough, a journalist from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin; and various persons interested in Indian languages and legends (see page 18, above).

Ragnarok: The Age of Fire and Gravel, a second work on popular science, was written in 1882 and published that year by D. Appleton. Although the book ran through nineteen American editions by 1899, it was never as popular as *Atlantis*. Donnelly's theory that the earth's soil was the debris of a comet, rather than the result of glaciation, was rejected or ignored by scientists, but publication of the book brought him correspondence with such people as Professor Rasmus B. Anderson of the University of Wisconsin.

A few research notes for *Atlantis* are found in the literary materials. Letters about both books are in the correspondence files for the 1880s and 1890s, but there are also letters and many clippings in vol. 127. Vol. 87 contains Donnelly's royalty accounts for the two books.

The Shakespeare-Bacon Controversy

Donnelly's interest in the writings of Shakespeare seems to have begun in the classroom of John S. Hart at Central High School. In 1859 he published an essay on the sonnets (vol. 98), and according to his diary he enjoyed seeing Shakespearean plays in Washington and Philadelphia theaters during his years in Congress.

Early in the 1870s he wrote an essay-lecture on "The Man Shakespeare" and in 1872, while campaigning in Wisconsin, he met George B. Smith of Madison, a leading Wisconsin stump speaker and early convert to the Baconian theory.

Smith corresponded with Donnelly and loaned him Nathaniel Holmes's *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays*. Donnelly's diary reveals that only a few days after receiving the book, he was at work on a lecture, "The Authorship of Shakespeare," which he apparently delivered for the first time at Red Wing, Minnesota, in February, 1873.

In the early 1880s Donnelly turned again to Shakespeare. In an encyclopedia of sports and amusements, he found a chapter on cryptography that set him on the long search for a cipher in the plays which he believed would reveal the full story of Bacon's authorship of the body of literature attributed to Shakespeare. After Donnelly purchased a facsimile of the 1623 folio of the Shakespearean plays, much of his time was dedicated to cipher studies.

Book lists (1909) reveal that he acquired a comprehensive library of works about Shakespeare. As word of his research was publicized, he began corresponding with scholars, among them men who shared his skepticism about the authorship of the plays. Letters from many people who wrote Donnelly about the cryptogram are largely in the correspondence files, although there are letters as well as clippings in vols. 128 and 129. There is much correspondence with James Appleton Morgan, who wrote *The Shakespearean Myth*; William H. Burr, a congressional reporter; and William D. O'Connor of Washington, D.C., who had defended Walt Whitman in *The Good Gray Poet* and who staunchly supported Donnelly in *Mr. Donnelly's Reviewers* (Chicago, 1889 — library pamphlets, vol. 76). There are other letters during the 1880s and 1890s from John H. Stotsenburg; J. A. Wilstach of LaFayette, Indiana, lawyer, litterateur, and translator of Dante and Vergil; Professor Thomas Davidson of Orange, New Jersey; Joseph Medill of the *Chicago Tribune*; William H. Wyman of Cincinnati, compiler of a Shakespeare bibliography; W. F. C. Wigston; Carter Glass, later a member of Congress; and James T. Cobb, an eccentric from Salt Lake City.

There are a few letters from editors Edward Gordon Clark of the *North American Review* and James Knowles of the *Nineteenth Century Review*; from Theodore Bacon, nephew of Delia S. Bacon, author of *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakspeare Unfolded*; from Nathaniel Holmes; and from Cushman K. Davis, Minnesota governor, senator, and author of *Shakespeare and the Law*. Accounts of Donnelly's cipher studies appeared in Minneapolis and Washington newspapers in 1885, and in that year President Grover Cleveland's sister, Rose Elizabeth, wrote to him and received him at the White House.

In the summer of 1887 he made arrangements for the publication of *The Great Cryptogram* with R. S. Peale and Company of Chicago. It was finally published in the United States in March, 1888, while Donnelly was on his way to England to launch the British edition published by Sampson, Lowe and Company. In London Donnelly was welcomed into the society of Baconians and introduced to prominent and influential people who it was hoped would endorse his book. He lectured to the Bacon Society at Westminster Hall in London and debated the authorship of the Shakespearean plays at Oxford and Cambridge universities. Donnelly's acquaintances among prominent Baconians included Constance M. (Mrs. Henry) Pott, Robert M. Theobald, and William H. Smith. The Earl of Aberdeen (John C. Hamilton-Gordon) took him to visit the

House of Lords, and William E. Gladstone wrote a cordial note (supplement). Letters from these persons are in his correspondence files, as well as others from George P. Bidder, an English mathematician; Samuel Timmons; George S. Stronach, an Edinburgh librarian; S. R. Van Campen, a Dutch author; and J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, author of many works on Shakespeare.

The sale of *The Great Cryptogram* disappointed both Donnelly and his publishers and there is much correspondence about its promotion. Disagreement finally culminated in a lawsuit between Donnelly and Peale (see page 15, above).

Donnelly continued his Shakespeare research in the 1890s and wrote another long manuscript. Part of it was issued by Donnelly himself under the imprint of the Verulam Publishing Company as *The Cipher in the Plays, and on the Tombstone* (Minneapolis, 1899). It presented the results of his later cipher investigations and suggested a connection between Bacon and the Rosicrucian movement. A second part, "The Cipher in Ben Jonson's Work," which was never published, suggested that Bacon had an important hand in the writings of Ben Jonson and other authors of his day.

The literary materials contain manuscript and typescript versions of the two cipher works, a bulky file of cipher studies, largely arranged in chronological order, and miscellaneous articles and notes on his research, as well as a clipping file which contains notices of his work from British papers. The correspondence, diaries, and scrapbooks include much information about Donnelly's lectures, articles, and debates on the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. He spoke to college students, literary societies, chautauquas, and lyceums, and he debated the subject with such men as John G. Freeman, Charles W. Pearson, W. L. Davidson, and Robert G. Ingersoll (1891).

Literature of Social Protest

There is little direct information in the Donnelly Papers about his literary contributions to the three newspapers with which he was associated, but there are some financial records for the *Emigrant Aid Journal* (vol. 84), much correspondence about the *Anti-Monopolist* and the *Representative*, and subscription lists and financial records for the latter.

In 1873 he wrote his *Facts for the Granges* (library pamphlets, vol. 76), but he did not turn to novel writing as a method of social protest until after the publication of *The Great Cryptogram* (1887). Of his three published novels, *Caesar's Column* is the most famous. Published in Chicago by F. J. Schulte under the pen name of Edmund Boisgilbert, it was soon acknowledged as Donnelly's work, was translated into Norwegian, Swedish, and German, and was, next to Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, said to be the best-known piece of radical fiction of the late nineteenth century. It was a best seller from the beginning and was issued in many editions, including three in England.

His second novel, *Dr. Huguet*, published by the St. Paul bookseller D. D. Merrill, was a bold attempt, far in advance of his time, to explain to white Americans what it meant to be a Negro. It is the story of an aristocrat in the post-Civil War South whose spirit and mind are placed in the body of a poor

Negro. Soon after the book was published, Donnelly wrote that Negro railroad porters had been reading it and were "especially kind and attentive on the sleeper," but the book was never as successful as *Caesar's Column*.

In *The Golden Bottle*, a novel published by Merrill, and *The American People's Money*, a chatty economic-political tract published by Laird and Lee of Chicago, Donnelly attempted to discuss money problems and some of the ideals of the People's party. There are some letters and newspaper clippings about these books and a separate scrapbook of clippings about *Caesar's Column* (vol. 130). The literary materials contain manuscripts for the latter, for *The Golden Bottle*, and for an unfinished, undated novel, "The Devil's Needle."

Other Literary Projects

In 1871 Donnelly studied the notes of his first trip to Minnesota and wrote his recollections of the journey (vol. 6). Many years later he continued the compilation of a journal based on his recollections and his diaries. A campaign document, published as *Donnelliana* (1892), is credited to Everett W. Fish, editor of *The Great West*, but the incomplete manuscript suggests that it was compiled and written by Donnelly and John A. Giltinan. These items, the manuscript of his tribute to his wife, *In Memoriam, Mrs. Katharine Donnelly*, published in 1895, and his unpublished notes on Ireland and the Irish people, are in the literary materials. A typewritten manuscript among the Irish notes was loaned by Philip C. Donnelly for inclusion in this microfilm edition of the Donnelly Papers.

SUPPLEMENT

Fifty-eight frames of microfilm at the end of Roll 167 reproduce manuscripts, some undated and others from 1852 to 1898. These were contained in a scrapbook in the possession of Mrs. Trevor Bowen of New York City. The items include cards, invitations, programs, and letters chiefly of autograph interest. The photocopies are arranged and filmed in chronological order. The writers, listed here alphabetically, are: John C. Breckinridge, David Paul Brown, Benjamin H. Brewster, General A. G. Curtin, Mrs. Mary B. (William J.) Bryan, Charles Darwin, James A. Garfield, Henry George, William E. Gladstone, Horace Greeley, H. W. Halleck, Oliver W. Holmes, Joseph Jefferson, William Lochren, Justin McCarthy, James Whitcomb Riley, William H. Seward, Edwin Sherman, William T. Sherman, William H. Smith, John H. Stevens, Adolph Sutra, Walt Whitman, and Fernando Wood.

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The political biography *Ignatius Donnelly, The Portrait of a Politician* (Chicago, 1962) by Martin Ridge is based on a careful study of the Donnelly Papers and related collections of manuscripts in the Minnesota Historical Society. It also draws on collections in institutions throughout the country, utilizes many unpublished studies of special aspects of Donnelly's life and career, and contains a detailed bibliography.

A laudatory though useful biographical sketch and collection of excerpts from Donnelly's writings is Everett W. Fish's *Donnelliana: An Appendix to Caesar's Column. Excerpts from the Wit, Wisdom, Poetry and Eloquence of Ignatius Donnelly* (Chicago, 1892). Evidence contained in the papers (Roll 134) suggests that Donnelly and John A. Giltinan were the true authors. The first part of the volume was also published separately in the same year as a *Biography of Ignatius Donnelly*. John D. Hicks, "The Political Career of Ignatius Donnelly," in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 8:80-132 (June-September, 1921), was the first scholarly study of Donnelly's career based on the Donnelly Papers. Although the author did not use all the papers available today, it is in general a sound evaluation of Donnelly's life and political career.

Dudley S. Brainerd's "Nininger: A Boom Town of the Fifties," in *Minnesota History*, 13:127-151 (June, 1932) describes Donnelly's part in the settlement of Nininger. Many articles in *Minnesota History* are concerned with other aspects of Donnelly's career and national third-party politics. A good example is Rhoda R. Gilman's "Ramsey, Donnelly, and the Congressional Campaign of 1868," 36:300-308 (December, 1959). Noteworthy among unpublished works is "The Diary of Ignatius Donnelly, 1859-1884," edited by Theodore L. Nydahl, a doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Minnesota in 1941. Nydahl's typed and edited version of the diaries from 1885 to 1899 is in the manuscripts department of the Minnesota Historical Society. Memories of Donnelly in his later years are contained in two oral history interviews in the possession of the society: one by Martin Ridge in 1950 with Mrs. Henry L. (Marion O.) Woltman and the other by Russell W. Fridley, Lucile M. Kane, and Helen M. White in 1966 with Mrs. Trevor Bowen. The society's department of public communications holds files of the *Emigrant Aid Journal*, the *Anti-Monopolist*, and the *Representative*.

Of Donnelly's literary career very little has been written. A useful summary is the unpublished manuscript of Donald H. De Meules, "The Literary Efforts of Ignatius Donnelly," a research paper prepared at Mankato State College, July, 1958, of which the Minnesota Historical Society has a copy. A shorter and more limited treatment of the subject by De Meules was published as "Ignatius Donnelly, A Don Quixote in the World of Science," in *Minnesota History*, 37:229-234 (June, 1961). Norman Pollock's "Ignatius Donnelly on Human Rights: A Study of Two Novels," in *Mid-America*, 47:99-112 (April, 1965), discusses Donnelly's humanitarian views as expressed in *Dr. Huguet* and *The Golden Bottle*, and capably defends Donnelly against charges of anti-Semitism. Walter B. Rideout has provided a perceptive introduction to a new edition of *Caesar's Column* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), and a new edition of *Atlantis* (New York, 1949) edited by Egerton Sykes contains introductory notes by Sykes, Hans S. Bellamy, and Lewis Spence. Donnelly's text is supplemented by notes marshaling evidence in support of the Atlantis theory from the work of Hans Hoerbiger and others. A more critical view of Donnelly as a pseudoscientific writer is presented in Martin Gardner, *In the Name of Science* (New York, 1952).

William D. O'Connor's *Mr. Donnelly's Reviewers* (New York, 1889) is a contemporary defense of Donnelly against critical reviewers of *The Great Crypto-*

gram. The theory that a cryptogram in Shakespeare's writings attests to Francis Bacon's authorship is examined critically by cryptographers William F. and Elizabeth S. Friedman in *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* (Cambridge, England, 1957).

THE MICROFILM

CORRESPONDENCE AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| Roll 1. | Undated, 1812, 1836–October, 1855 | Roll 23. | February 16–May, 1865 |
| Roll 2. | November, 1855–September, 1856 | Roll 24. | June–December 10, 1865 |
| Roll 3. | October, 1856–March 14, 1857 | Roll 25. | December 11, 1865–January 31, 1866 |
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| Roll 6. | August, 1858–June, 1859 | Roll 28. | May 23–July 14, 1866 |
| Roll 7. | July, 1859–August, 1860 | Roll 29. | July 15–November, 1866 |
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| Roll 9. | October, 1861–May, 1862 | Roll 31. | February–March 23, 1867 |
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| Roll 12. | March–June, 1863 | Roll 34. | January–February 15, 1868 |
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| Roll 16. | February 16–March 20, 1864 | Roll 38. | June 12–July, 1868 |
| Roll 17. | March 21–April 25, 1864 | Roll 39. | August–November 15, 1868 |
| Roll 18. | April 26–June 8, 1864 | Roll 40. | November 16, 1868–March, 1869 |
| Roll 19. | June 9–July 31, 1864 | Roll 41. | April–November, 1869 |
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| Roll 21. | December, 1864–January 15, 1865 | Roll 43. | April–August, 1870 |
| Roll 22. | January 16–February 15, 1865 | Roll 44. | September–December, 1870 |
| | | Roll 45. | January–November, 1871 |
| | | Roll 46. | December, 1871–May, 1872 |

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| Roll 48. December, 1872–July, 1873 | Roll 75. May–October, 1885 |
| Roll 49. August–December, 1873 | Roll 76. November, 1885–May, 1886 |
| Roll 50. January–April, 1874 | Roll 77. June–September, 1886 |
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| Roll 52. July 25–September, 1874 | Roll 79. January–April, 1887 |
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