

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ Margaret Slater Collection, 1931-1954 ◀

MSS-269

Size: .25 linear feet

Provenance: Received from Mary-Ella Holst via Jamie Barlow and Charlene Gilbert, Dept. of Women's & Gender Studies

Access: Open

Collection Summary: This collection consists of a scrapbook compiled by police Sergeant Margaret Slater, which includes clippings from Toledo newspapers as well as photographs and journal articles.

Subject(s): [Crime and Criminals](#), [Women](#)

Related Collections: Toledo Chief of Police Miscellaneous Papers, MSS-162

Processing Note: Most of the news clippings in this scrapbook were glued onto individual sheets of paper. Due to the scrapbook's age, some clippings have become un-glued from these papers over time; these clippings have been photocopied and re-inserted throughout the scrapbook where appropriate. Care should be taken when viewing the clippings to avoid any further detaching of articles.

Copyright: The literary rights to this collection are assumed to rest with the person(s) responsible for the production of the particular items within the collection, or with their heirs or assigns. Researchers bear full legal responsibility for the acquisition to publish from any part of said collection per *Title 17, United States Code*. The **Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections** may reserve the right to intervene as intermediary at its own discretion.

Completed by: Tamara Jones, June 2013

Margaret Slater
Collection, 1931-1954

Biographical Sketch

Margaret Slater was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1892. When she was 6 years old, her father was elected sheriff of Osage, Kansas, an event which introduced Margaret to law enforcement for the first time. In 1918, she moved with her husband George to Toledo, where she first served as a store detective and later worked for the Richard Secor Detective Agency.

Slater became involved with the Toledo Police Department during her time as a private detective, when she took the policemen's and women's civil service exam. The purpose of the exam was to investigate suspected irregularities in civil service appointments, but ironically, Slater was instead appointed to the position on April 16, 1922. She patrolled the streets for two years and in 1928 was promoted to sergeant and head of the police women's bureau. In this position, "Sarge" – as she was known to Toledoans – also became a spokesperson on crime prevention and served as an advisor to police departments in other cities. She was known for opposing both the wearing of uniforms by female police officers and the carrying of service pistols in their purses. In a letter she wrote to the editor of *The Blade*, she listed the latter as a pet peeve, saying that a policewoman who carries her pistol in her pocketbook "...cannot even locate a lipstick in an emergency."

In 1957, after 35 years of service, Slater announced her retirement from the Toledo police force. The police women's bureau, which she had headed for 29 of those years, was abolished after her retirement, becoming part of the crime prevention bureau. She later moved to a farm near Mt. Gilead, Ohio with her husband, although she continued speaking to area churches and civic and social clubs about her experiences and on matters of juvenile delinquency. She died on January 12, 1965.

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Scope and Content Note

Most of the contents of Margaret Slater's scrapbook consist of clippings collected from local newspapers, mainly the *Blade*, the *Toledo News-Bee*, and the *Toledo Times*. The articles span the early 1930s to the early 1950s and mostly cover the efforts of Slater and other members of law enforcement to combat the city's various crimes and social problems, including robbery and theft; gambling; drug use; and juvenile delinquency. Although most articles pertain to Toledo and the surrounding area, a few cover issues at the national level as well. Other clippings include letters to the editor and miscellaneous articles about Slater outside of police work, including an attack of appendicitis she suffered in 1933. The articles are often grouped by year, but are not necessarily arranged in chronological order within a given year. Also included are several undated black-and-white photographs (most are of Slater), and two additional publications: an issue of the official journal of the Fraternal Order of Police, and an article from *The Toledo City Journal* about a revolver competition that Slater and other Toledo policewomen competed in. In order to protect the condition of these items, the photographs and journal articles have been filed separately from the newspaper clippings. They are listed in the folder inventory as "photographs" and "publications," respectively.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item
1	1	Newspaper Clippings, 1931-1953
1	2	Photographs, n.d
1	3	Publications, November 1941 and September 25, 1954