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INTRODUCTION

The General Russell Circle No. 144 was the Pittsburg, Kansas chapter for the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. The organization was dedicated to making the surrounding area more patriotic through community service projects and special programs. This collection contains minutes and dues ledger books, programs, newsletters, and miscellaneous items.

DONOR INFORMATION

The materials in this collection were donated by Reggie Smith in 2004.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was created in 1866 by Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson. The goal of this organization was to keep members of the Union forces connected after the Civil War ended. At first, the organization was organized as a branch of the Republican Party; however, it almost disbanded due to the unrest of the reconstruction in the South. It was revitalized in the 1880s under a new platform to give pensions to veterans. The GAR continued to support veterans' affairs until it was formally dissolved in 1956, when its last member died. Pittsburg became associated with GAR in 1882 when it became Post No. 65 and was named in honor of General Russell.

The Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic (LGAR) was formed as an auxiliary to the GAR. It was composed of female relatives of former Union soldiers. The General Russell Circle No. 144 was formed in 1919. This group promoted patriotism in the Pittsburg area through different service projects and programs. Their largest program was an Americanization class offered to newly arrived immigrants. They also held an annual Lincoln tea. The circle is named after Brigadier-General David Allen Russell, who died during the Battle of Opequon in 1964. The chapter was dissolved in the 1974.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection has four series: **Minutes Books**, **Programs**, **The Bugle Call**, and **Miscellaneous**.

The **Minutes Books** are from the General Russell Post No. 64 and Circle No. 144.

The **Programs** series contains programs for the Annual Encampments on the national and state level, and a General Orders from LGAR.

The **Bugle Call** series includes newsletters from 1967 to 1979.

The **Miscellaneous** series is an information paper regarding the history of the American Flag and how to display it respectfully.

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