North American Women in Iceland: Travel, Travel Writing, and Domestic Feminism, 1866-1939

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ABSTRACT: In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, dozens of travel narratives about Iceland appeared in the United States. The majority of these were written by and for men and women of the wealthier, upper class, as those were the only Americans who could afford to make the long journey to Iceland. However, as the costs of steamship travel became more affordable, a more economically diverse collection of American tourists began visiting Iceland. In many cases, middle-class American women would journey to Iceland and then share their experiences by giving lectures and talks in social clubs, writing articles in more female-focused periodicals like Ladies' Home Companion, or to giving interviews in their hometown newspapers. In this paper, I will explore the "feminine" space of the social club and the role it played in the perception of Iceland among middle class American women.

RÉSUMÉ: À la fin du XIXe siècle et au début du XXe siècle, des dizaines de récits de voyage sur l'Islande ont été publiés aux États-Unis. Le plus souvent, ces récits étaient écrits par et pour des hommes et des femmes de la classe fortunée, de la bourgeoisie, vu qu'ils étaient les seuls Américains à pouvoir se permettre de faire le long voyage vers l'Islande. Cependant, à mesure que le coût des voyages en bateau à vapeur devenait plus abordable, des touristes américains plus diversifiés sur le plan économique ont commencé à visiter l'Islande. Dans de nombreux cas, des femmes américaines de la classe moyenne se rendaient en Islande et partageaient ensuite leurs expériences en donnant des conférences et des exposés dans des clubs sociaux, en écrivant des articles dans des périodiques visant un lectorat féminin comme le Ladies' Home Companion, ou en donnant des entrevues dans les journaux de leur ville natale. Dans cet article, j'explorerai l'espace « féminin » du club social et le rôle qu'il a joué dans la perception de l'Islande parmi les femmes américaines de la classe moyenne.

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In 1866, a Mrs. J.M. Heinolf, of Rochester, New York, married the captain of an American whaling vessel, which they took together to Iceland for their honeymoon. Eighteen years later, Mrs. Heinolf recounted some of her experiences to a reporter of the *Democrat and Chronicle*. In the article, she claimed to have been "the first American lady visitor to Iceland" ("Land of the Eiderdown"). While we cannot verify her statement, Mrs. Heinolf's story is representative of the narratives that have survived by American women who traveled to Iceland in the late-nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century. Firstly, because her first name is not mentioned, she is nearly anonymous. Indeed, this interview about Iceland remains one of the only indications that Mrs. Heinolf truly lived. She, like many women from this period, went by her (second) husband's name. Secondly, the newspaper article was written by the reporter who conducted the interview, not Mrs. Heinolf herself, adding to her anonymity. Brief reports, such as *The Journal Times*' synopsis of the Mrs. Jerome Raymond's 1913 lecture, "An American Woman in Iceland," give us tantalizing but incomplete, second-hand accounts of American women's experiences in Iceland ("Tells of Work of Women"). Finally, there was an audience interested in Iceland. Although nearly twenty years had passed, the editors at the *Democrat and Chronicle* thought the people of Rochester would find this experience worth reading. As this article will demonstrate, many American women who visited Iceland would then share their experiences—often with other women—through lecturing or writing short articles. For instance, Mabel Percy Haskell gave a lecture in 1894 to the College Club of Boston, one of the first women's college clubs in the U.S. Only a brief summary of this talk survives in the *Freeland Tribune* under the heading, "News and Notes for Women."

This paper aims to highlight the forgotten women from North America[1] who visited Iceland before World War II and shared their experiences through modes of "domestic feminism." This private form of feminism empowered women *within* the family and not outside of the "domestic" sphere. Coined by Daniel Smith Scott (40-57) in 1973, it was at times at odds with the public demand for suffrage during the Victorian era. Karen J. Blair (1-13, 115) extends the definition of "domestic feminism" and points to the women's social clubs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a venue through which middle-class ladies could be "properly" defiant—that is, to socialize, gain knowledge and expand what limited power they had within a socially-acceptable organization. Ladies reluctant to take a stronger public stance on suffrage or feminism turned to these half-public spheres like women's clubs where information could be shared freely among women.[2]

American women who visited Iceland tended to channel their observations through these same "safe" spaces, publishing articles in magazines with a targeted audience and limited readership, like *The Ladies Home Companion* (1873-

1957) or *The Southern Workman* (1872-1939), giving interviews to local newspapers, or giving talks and lectures at social clubs in their hometowns.[3] Although the content of these lectures and articles were hardly controversial—Blair explains that most literary clubs banned topics of religion and politics—involvement in clubs often served as the "first step for feminists determined to improve their status" (58). Some women ventured into more "public" spaces, writing articles in the *New York Times* or *Boston Globe*, i.e., newspapers with wider circulation. It is unclear exactly why British women travel writers felt more comfortable in the "public" space of narrative travel writing; but it is important to note that education and women's rights in Iceland were important topics for women both in America and in the UK. One common thread stands out among the American narratives: writers and lecturers highlight the American relationship to Iceland, whether through the medieval past like Ackermann or through similarities of racial spirit, culture or government (Lethbridge 147-150). By staying mostly within the confines of the acceptable "domestic" space, the forgotten American women who traveled to Iceland prior to World War II provided information about Iceland and its culture to a more "domestic" audience, i.e. housewives, schoolteachers, and curious women who were eager to learn about Iceland.

Women traveled from North America to Iceland for a variety of reasons. Some were scientists, artists, or writers for whom the Icelandic birds, plants, and landscapes provided new material for their research or projects. Others were simply tourists. Some women braved an extensive trip on the back of an Icelandic pony over lava fields and mountains into the road-less countryside, while those who came later in the twentieth century could hire an automobile to take them to national sites like Þingvellir, which still attracts thousands of tourists today. Those tourists who stopped in Iceland on the North Cape cruise spent only about three days on the island, most likely did not venture far from the capital city of Reykjavík and tended to think little of their stay compared to the other sites they visited on mainland Europe. And yet, some American women were deeply invested in Iceland, its relationship to America, or the "discovery" of America by the medieval Norse. Some of these women wrote lengthy accounts of their travels, some lectured about their experiences at local social clubs, and others were simply mentioned in their local newspaper as having made the trip to Iceland. This paper will highlight their travel to Iceland, their travel narratives, and their relationship to Iceland after returning to America in order to reveal the sheer number and the diversity of American women who traveled to Iceland before World War II.

Early Visits to Iceland

Icelandic travel writing has a rich history, albeit relatively brief. Although there had been contact between Icelanders and other Europeans for centuries, Iceland did not receive very many visitors (Wawn 2000). After a disastrous eighteenth century, culminating in the Laki volcanic eruptions, two significant changes allowed tourists to travel more easily to Iceland: the steamship and Denmark's relinquish of its trade monopoly (Aho; Agnarsdóttir 15). Most of the earliest travelers who journeyed to Iceland did so in a professional capacity. Geologists, botanists, naturalists, missionaries, dignitaries, Old Norse scholars, and professional travel writers boarded steamships from Copenhagen or Scotland and emerged a week or two later in Iceland, many of whom would later publish observations and recollections from their time on the island. Sir George Mackenzie, Henry Holland, and John Thomas Stanley were just a few of the prominent British figures who sailed to Iceland for scientific expeditions and who published narratives about their findings and experiences (Wawn 1982-1985; Aho). Ebenezer Henderson was a Scottish missionary who sailed to Iceland in order to distribute Bibles. His 1818 work *Iceland, or the Journal of Residence in the Island* provided helpful information for later travelers. European professionals, such as French naturlist Joseph Paul Gaimard, German scientist Robert Bunsen, and Danish archaeologist Daniel Bruun, ventured to Iceland during the nineteenth century, similarly publishing their observations about the island. Sabine Baring-Gould, William Morris and W.G. Collingwood were Norse enthusiasts who visited Iceland later in the century in a semi-scholarly spirit, to see the places in which the medieval Icelandic sagas took place, each of them producing a travel narrative.[4]

While these professionals were generally European men, several women—often from England and Scotland—also went to Iceland as part of their occupation. Scottish painter and ornithologist Jemima Blackburn (1823-1909) visited Iceland in 1878, publishing her observations in *Good Words* magazine. British aristocrat Mary Russell (1865-1937) wrote an article about her bird observations on the island of Grimsey in 1910. One of the earliest—if not the first—professional female travel writer to make the trek to Iceland account was Austrian explorer Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858), who published her narrative *Reise nach dem skandinavischen Norden und der Insel Island im Jahre* (1846) a year after her visit.[5] An English translation, *Journey to Iceland*, appeared in 1852. Inspired by her love of Icelandic literature, Elizabeth Jane Oswald (1830-1905) visited the country in 1875, like her contemporary William Morris, specifically to see the farms and famous sites of the Icelandic sagas. Her 1882 narrative, *By Fell and Fjord, or Scenes and Studies in Iceland*, was one of the first travel books about Iceland to contain a map of where she visited and also emphasized the role of

women in Icelandic sagas (Wawn 2000). Novelist and travel writer Mary Gordon Disney Leith sailed to Iceland almost a dozen times and wrote about several of her excursions in her book *Three Visits to Iceland* (1897).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Icelandic travel narrative had become a genre in its own right (Lethbridge 137; Wawn 2000).[6] North American writers were slow to capitalize on the growing interest in Iceland, mostly due to its extreme remoteness and the difficulty in traveling there. Several narratives written by American men appeared near the end of the century, most notably Samuel Kneeland's *An American in Iceland* (1875) and Bayard Taylor's *Egypt and Iceland in the Year 1874* (1874), both books resulting in their trip to Iceland for the one-thousand-year celebration of its settlement. Yet, as Emily Lethbridge has pointed out, there are very few travel narratives written by American women from this period (Lethbridge 156, fn. 16). Curiously, no American woman—with possibly one exception—published a travel *book* like those mentioned here, but many published short articles. Or, in the case of Adelia Gates (1825-1912) and Maud Parrish (1878-1976), Iceland occupies a chapter in a book describing traveling around the world.[7]

Adela E. Orpen, who was nursed and raised by Gates, would go on to publish the stories of her former governess's travels in *The Chronicles of the Sid; Or, the Life and Travels of Adelia Gates* (1893). Orpen recounts Gates's time in Iceland in the final chapter, describing Þingvellir in remarkably novel way by comparing the landscape to a dessert:

> The valley seems to have behaved very much as a top pie-crust does upon cooling down. The crust of a pie, as many cooks know to their disgust, has a tendency to break away from the edge of the dish and settle down in the middle, leaving a gaping crevasse all around the outer edge. This is precisely the course of action which the Thingvellir has followed. As it cooled down it settled away from the edge, and now there is a deep fissure and a drop of some hundred feet or more between this notable crust and the lava-dish which contains it (404).

While this description is fascinating and unique, we run into the same issue with Mrs. Heinolf: these are not the words of Adelia Gates but rather from Orpen, a second party—albeit a much closer source than a newspaper reporter.

Another early account of Icelandic travel from an American woman comes from Anna von Rydingsvärd (1856-1911), a professional artist, educator and translator, who became a rather prominent figure in Boston after her marriage to Swedish-born wood carver Karl von Rydingvsärd. She visited Iceland in 1893, just two years after translating from Swedish Albrekt Julius Segerstedt's *My Lady Legend, and Other Folk Tales of the North*. In August and September of that year,

she published a five-part series in *The Boston Evening Transcript* titled "A Summer in Iceland."

Through these articles, Anna von Rydingsvärd demonstrates her knowledge of not only Icelandic culture but also its economy and literature—particularly the medieval Icelandic sagas. Even more fascinating is the fact that Rydingsvärd published this material in the "public" sphere, through the widely read *Boston Evening Transcript*. She also published later in 1893 an article titled "The Icelandic Woman" in the journal *The Woman's Tribune*. In this "safer" space, she highlights the attributes she sees in Icelandic women:

> Cheerfulness in spite of deprivations, courage in the face of hardships, submission to the inevitable in the frowning nature on all sides, but a just estimation of their position and worth in the family and national life, dignity of behavior and keenness of intellect—these are some of the qualities that distinguish them. Do you exclaim: 'This is an ideal woman!' Indeed she is not far from it...("The Icelandic Woman")

Rydingsvärd continued to write and lecture about Iceland for the remainder of her life. Aside from the series "A Summer in Iceland," the majority of her interaction with Iceland took place within the "feminine" spaces of women's clubs or journals targeted toward women—a trend that would continue to appear throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.

Nature, Temperance, and Travel from 1895

While Gates and Rydingsvärd were professional artists and writers, and their time in Iceland no doubt inspired their work, they did not travel to Iceland in order to *work*. However, starting in the year 1895, several American women brought their expertise to the island either to research the country's nature or to labor among its people. Elizabeth Taylor (1856-1932) was a naturalist and travel writer who spent nine weeks in Iceland during the summer of 1895. Taylor published a few scientific articles based on her observations, including "Eider-Duck Farms in Iceland" (1897) and "Mythological Relics in Iceland" (1898). Although her interest in the Faroe Islands, where she would spend the better part of two decades, overshadowed her time in Iceland, Taylor's observations of Icelandic birds and plants can be considered one of the earliest American contributions to the global interest in Icelandic nature.[8]

Three other American women went to Iceland during the same summer of 1895 but not to observe the natural world. Jessie Ackermann (1857-1951) sailed to the North Atlantic on behalf of the Women's Christian Temperance Union

(WCTU), an organization that focused on alcohol and social reform, accompanied by fellow union members Nana Pratt (1870-1957) and Ruth Shaffner (?-1905).[9] A key member of the WCTU, Ackermann had traveled as far as China, Japan, South Africa, Burma, and India, and she was instrumental in establishing chapters of the WCTU around the world. Around 1894, she returned to the U.S. in poor health after her temperance work in Australia and Africa (Tyrrell). Her journey to Iceland appears to have served three purposes: to establish a chapter of the WCTU, to write an article about the country on behalf of the magazine *Ladies' Home Companion*, and to recover her health.[10]

According to her articles, "Three Women in Iceland" parts I, II, and III, Ackermann's trip was a conventional one for the period. Like the European professionals and international tourists that came before them, she, Pratt, and Shaffner took a steamship from Scotland, met with high-ranking officials and respected writers in Reykjavík, ventured over lava fields on Icelandic ponies, and visited tourist spots like Þingvellir, the site where the medieval Icelandic parliament met. They did, however, climb a mountain for the sole purpose of planting a WCTU banner (Ackermann Dec. 1896). Ackermann says little about alcohol, temperance, or prohibition in her articles, but her mission becomes clear: she and the others aim to set up a WCTU chapter in Iceland with the help of fellow union member Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir. In her exposition of Ólafía, Ackermann calls her Icelandic friend the "new woman of Iceland," suggesting that, after the removal of alcohol from society, women will have new opportunities and roles in society (Kristmundsdóttir 188). Temperance and women's rights were in fact wound together in the nineteenth century, and Ruth Bordin (7) goes as far as to claim that women in temperance groups like the WCTU were "caught up in feminist goals" (Levin). Although the temperance movement had been in Iceland for around a decade, the WCTU was one of the first women-run groups, which would indeed make Ólafía a "new woman" of Iceland, as Ackermann, Pratt, and Shaffner were introducing new mode of feminist activism in Iceland.

That same year, the WCTU elected Sara Jane Crafts as the superintendent of their Sunday School department (Cherrington 727). Sara and her husband, Rev. Wilbur F. Crafts, were active in the prohibition movement in the U.S., with Wilbur heading the International Reform Bureau. Sara visited Iceland in 1910 but not on official WCTU or indeed prohibition business—although she remarks that Iceland's negligible jail population was due to the prohibition laws the Icelandic government had passed the previous year (Crafts). Instead, Crafts focused on Christian education in Icelandic churches, and she is remembered as having introduced Sunday School to Iceland.

The number of temperance workers coming to Iceland dwindled around this time, although tourists continued to remark upon Iceland's relationship with alcohol. Travelers like American educator Gertrude Austin (598)

condemned the drunkenness they'd seen in Iceland. Austin, however, struck a hopeful tone in her 1910 article, "A Trip Around Iceland" when she tells her readers of some new laws that were passed in the country that foreshadowed prohibition.[11] Indeed, Iceland banned alcohol in 1915. And although American women would continue to visit Iceland in a professional manner, they were outnumbered by the growing tourism industry that took hold after World War I.

Raymond-Whitcomb and the Social Club

In 1879, Walter Raymond and Irvine Whitcomb, who had both worked in the railroad industry, founded in Boston one of the earliest American travel agencies. The Raymond-Whitcomb Travel Agency began organizing train tours to the White Mountains of New Hampshire but quickly grew, cashing in on western railroads during the 1880s by marketing trips to California's must-see sights ("Rare Books"). By 1900, the company expanded their reach internationally. As the dust settled in the wake of the First World War, Raymond-Whitcomb began advertising their new cruise: Iceland, the Northern Cape, Norway, and more on their top-of-the-line steamer, *Franconia*, the Cunard Liner that held around 1,700 passengers. After crossing the Atlantic, the ship would anchor in the Reykjavík harbor for about three days before moving on to Scandinavia, England, Scotland, and finally mainland Europe. Hundreds of American tourists bought tickets, which began at around $850, and the company embarked on their first cruise in 1921.[12] In some cases, groups of women from the same town joined the cruise. For instance, four women from Hartford, Connecticut, journeyed in 1924 together on a summer cruise to Iceland, Norway, and the North Cape ("Summer Plans"). The following year, three friends from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, took the journey to Reykjavík and from there took a car to Þingvellir, which they described in the *Times-Leader* as a "natural volcanic ampitheatre" ("Folk You Know").

As mentioned above, early tourists like Anna von Rydingsvärd and Mrs. Jerome Raymond lectured several times about Iceland in different social gatherings. Jessie Ackermann likewise shared her experiences in Iceland for decades through public and private lectures. However, throughout the 1920s and 30s, middle-class women—many of them housewives about whom we know very little—took the Raymond-Whitcomb cruise to Iceland and returned to North America where they would share their knowledge and experiences from Iceland, its people, and its culture in social clubs and community venues like churches, libraries and civic halls.

A significant amount of these lectures and presentations took place within the "safe" space of women's clubs. For example, Rebecca Ellis Harrop in 1925

highlighted the Icelandic education system for the New Century Club in Philadelphia following her trip ("Lectures on Iceland"); Illinois chiropractor Dr. Ethelyn B. Dickinson shared her insights from her 1927 trip with the Woman's division of the Psalemas Club in Decatur ("Psalemas"); Jessie McCreery Oliver talked about her 1932 trip to the Tuesday Women's Club in Jefferson City, Missouri ("Tuesday Club"); and New York librarian Esther Holt spoke to the American Association of University Women after her return from Iceland in 1935 ("University Women"). As these clubs functioned to a certain degree as a form of higher education, the women in these communities often gained knowledge about Iceland through these lectures (Blair 57-58).

While each woman became a sort of authority on Iceland within these clubs and in their communities, Canadian journalist Maurine Robb's (1895-1990) interest in the country gained for her the reputation of being an Iceland expert. Born in London, Ontario, in 1895, Robb graduated from Wesley College in Manitoba and became a journalist and editor at the *Winnipeg Tribune* before the outbreak of World War I. She was one of two Canadian women who joined the all-women Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary corps during the war, obtaining the rank of lieutenant and receiving an officer's commission (Martin and Petrowski).[13] After an honorable discharge, she moved to the U.S. where she continued her education at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and published articles through respected and more "public" outlets like *The Boston Globe*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Unlike her contemporaries, Robb invokes a distinct playfulness in her writing, which reflects the pleasure she attained on her trip to Iceland. The first three paragraphs of her *Boston Globe* article begin: "Iceland—and I shiver." In the second article (April 20), she recounts trying to photograph workers in the herring industry in the fishing village of Siglufjörður. Dismayed at how difficult it was to catch a woman at work, she says: "The men were easier. When I waved at them to continue prodding the piles of fish, or washing them, or whatsoever nasty job they were doing, they smiled and did as I indicated. Instinctive masculine desire to please a girl, I guess!"

Robb, more than any other North American woman who traveled to Iceland during this period, ventured outside of the Domestic feminism of the social club or women's journal. She published an article on Iceland in *Current History Magazine* in 1924, and she routinely appeared on radio programs in the 1940s, where she spoke again about Iceland. Newspapers like *The Corpus Christi Caller* and *Sioux City Journal* referred to her as an Icelandic "authority." Yet, despite her very public career, she has remained a shadowy figure in history in both Iceland and in North America.

The Millenial Celebration

According to medieval *Íslendingabók* (The Book of Icelanders), Icelanders established the Alþingi, a governing body that many claim to have been the first democratic form of government, in year 930 (Grønlie 5). Other medieval Icelandic sagas describe how representatives from all over the country gathered on the plains of Þingvellir every summer to make laws, litigate lawsuits, and make marriage proposals. In the summer of 1930, Iceland celebrated the thousand-year anniversary of the Alþingi. Dignitaries, celebrities, and important figures from all over the world ventured to Iceland to participate in the millennial celebration. However, a significant number of tourists, including dozens of North American women of different professions and social classes, crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 1930 to see the festivities. Some of these women were invited by the Icelandic government, some were simply onlookers, and still others brought their experiences back to America through articles in newspapers and lectures in social clubs. Indeed, the millennial celebration highlights, perhaps better than any other event, the diversity of foreign women travelling to Iceland.

Lilian Schoedler (1891-1963) was the secretary and personal assistant to Boston businessman Edward Filene. Through his connections, she was able to secure a tent at Þingvellir for the millennial celebrations. Germany had sent some of its airplanes to Iceland for the occasion, and Schoedler and some fellow tourists hired one to take them to Ísafjörður in north-west Iceland, making her one of the first foreign women to fly in an airplane in Iceland (Lilian Schoedler Papers). Dr. Rosalie Slaughter Morton (1876-1968), a surgeon from New York, also visited in 1930. A pioneer in her field—the first woman faculty member at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons—Morton had traveled to Europe frequently since WWI, served in a hospital in France, and was honored in Yugoslavia and Serbia for her medical work ("Dr. Rosalie Slaughter Morton") Morton's trip to Iceland left a lasting impression, as she would periodically lecture about it over the following decades.

On the other end of the financial spectrum, we find Margaret Eddy, a high school teacher from Illinois, who sailed on the S.S. Polonia from New York to Iceland—possibly the same ship that took Schoedler—accompanied by fellow teacher Norma Berg in the summer of 1930. Very little information could be uncovered on these educators, and even their dates of birth remain unknown. Clara Suckow (1882-1967), a resident of Franklin, Indiana, who served on the county welfare board is similarly an obscure figure, also took the opportunity to see the event. Fellow Hoosier, librarian Ida Matthews (1869-1943), also journeyed to Iceland in 1930 but arrived in late July and missed the festivities.

One of the most notable American women at the millennial celebrations was Nashville singer Kitty Cheatham (1864-1946). Cheatham had developed interest in Iceland some years prior. In 1926 she gave a lecture over the wireless radio titled "What We Owe to Iceland" ("On the Air"). She was also reportedly the first American singer to perform traditional Icelandic folk songs.[14] Icelandic politicians took notice of Cheatham's interest in their country, which resulted in an invitation from the Alþingi to Cheatham to speak at Þingvellir during the 1930 celebrations ("Ungfrú Kitty Cheatham"). Unfortunately, no transcript of her speech survives today.

Cheatham, like Maurine Robb, channeled her interest in Iceland through much more "public" spaces, such as *The New York Times*, than women's journals or social clubs (Cheatham 1935). Yet, like Robb, Cheatham's influence has been forgotten. For instance, Cheatham had a great passion for Icelandic "discovery" of North America as related in the Vinland sagas. She reportedly wrote several articles about the medieval Norse explorer Leifur Eiríksson, though few of these writings survive. Still, her impact is noted by several newspapers. *The Tennessean* called her "a noted authority on Norse subjects" ("Kitty Cheatham Pays Tribute"). The *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, meanwhile, compared her efforts in promoting the Norse "discovery" with those of Rasmus B. Anderson, which will be discussed in more detail below ("The Millennial in Iceland"). Scholars investigating the reception of medieval Icelandic literature in the United States have analyzed Anderson's contributions thoroughly, but Cheatham's engagement with Icelandic culture has been overlooked.[15]

Western Icelanders

Among the many people who came to Iceland in 1930 were the Western Icelanders. During the late nineteenth century, hundreds of Icelanders emigrated from Iceland to North America (Wolf 1-3). The majority of these immigrants settled throughout the northern American plains, with the largest communities being in Manitoba, Canada, while smaller communities could be found in North Dakota and Minnesota. The Western Icelanders retained strong links to Iceland and continued speaking and writing in Icelandic for many years. Hundreds of delegations, representatives, descendants, extended family members, and curious ventured to the Icelandic homeland for the millennial celebrations.

One of the most anticipated Western Icelander coming "home" was Thorstina Jackson Walters, who, like Kitty Cheatham, had been invited to Iceland by the Alþingi. Her name appeared in several advertisements for the event in Icelandic newspapers. Walters had made a name for herself in the Icelandic community both in North America and Iceland during the 1920s when

she published several articles and books about Icelanders in North America. In 1926 she published *Saga Íslendinga í Norður Dakota* (The History of Icelanders in North Dakota) in Icelandic. That same year, Walters made her first trip to Iceland, traveling to Akureyri and other rural communities lecturing on Western Icelandic communities ("Vélbátur sekkur"). Here, we have evidence that information flowed both ways through lectures: instead of touring Iceland and returning to America to share her experience, Walters takes her experience in America with her to share with the Icelanders.[16]

Walters certainly found an audience in Iceland. In her article, "Iceland in 1927," an Icelandic housewife bombards Walters with questions about life in America:

> You come from a wonderful country, but isn't your population growing too fast? Have you really pitched your tents over there? Do many people believe it was Leifur Eriksson who discovered America? I understand that they have an Icelandic library of 15,000 volumes at Cornell; do you think many people read those books? (227)

Another farmer seems intrigued by the racial discrimination taking place in the United States at that time when he asks: "'What is that queer sect that sweeps down from the mountains by night, wearing trailing white gowns and hoods, tearing people out of their beds—they must be a wild lot.' The Ku-Klux Klan had no place in my questioners ideas of organized society" (Thorstina & Emile Walters Papers).

It is difficult to say how Walters addressed the difficult truth of racial prejudice in America to the Icelanders. Her depictions of Iceland to her English readers, however, were idealized. She romanticized Iceland's past and present and suggested that through literacy, Iceland achieved an almost egalitarian society. Indeed, it was reading Iceland's medieval literature that tied people of all classes together:

> No nation has as persistently worshipped its classics as the Icelanders; the scholar deciphering a mouldy manuscript, the farmer at his homely tasks, the shepherd boy with his long-fleeced flock and the dairy maid with her cumbersome churn, all alike have made the best literature of the country a part of their being and conversed in the language of the Eddas and Sagas, pure and free from dialects (Thorstina & Emile Walters Papers).

Thanks to Walters's contribution to both Icelandic and Western Icelandic cultures, she had been awarded the Order of the Knight's Cross of the Order of the Flacon from the King of Denmark in 1926 and was invited to be a guest of honor at the 1930 celebrations (Thorstina & Emile Walters Papers). That same year, she translated into English *The Vinland Voyages* by Matthías Þórðarsson, the then-director of the National Museum of Iceland. Upon her return, Walters traveled all over the United States and Canada lecturing about Iceland. Despite her failing health, she continued writing about Icelandic-American relationships, publishing *The Story of Icelanders in North America* in 1953, six years before her death.

Walters was one of dozens if not hundreds of Western Icelandic women coming to Iceland—many for the first time—in 1930. An article in *Alþýðublaðið* in June 1930 lists her name among several others that made the long journey ("Alþingishátíðin"). Many of these women were Canadian nurses and teachers about whom we know very little: Jennie Johnson, Mary Anderson, Kristín Skúlason, and Emma Sigurðsson. Some, however, were, like Walters, well known in Iceland. Mekkin S. Perkins, for instance, is listed as "þýðari" (translator) in the article; however, her best-remembered work would not come until 1943 when she translated into English *Icelandic Poems and Stories*, edited by Richard Beck (Eyjolfson 24). Elin Anderson, another Western Icelander, is mentioned as simply "research worker við Vermontháskólann (with the University of Vermont)" (Alþingishátíðin"). Anderson grew up in Winnipeg but eventually moved to New York. She received her M.A. from Columbia University before being hired by the University of Vermont to help conduct the Eugenics Survey in 1931. She studied different ethnic communities in Burlington, Vermont, and completed her report with the book *We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City* (Harvard University Press, 1937). The book dramatically changed the approach to studying different ethnicities and challenged the racist utilization of eugenics in America, where racial prejudice was still pervasive ("The Eugenics Survey in Vermont"). Although she never wrote about travelling to Iceland in 1930, she, like many of the other women, did give lectures about Iceland in different cities around the U.S. and Canada.

Not mentioned in the June 1930 *Alþýðublaðið* article are the names Ellen Jameson and Enga Johnson. These women were also first-generation Western Icelanders who also returned to Iceland for the 1930 summer celebrations. But they did not come from Winnipeg or North Dakota; they lived in the small Icelandic community of Spanish Forks, Utah. The settlement—the earliest of its kind for Icelandic immigrants—traces its roots back to a group of Icelanders, mostly from Vestmannaeyjar, who joined the Church of Latter Day Saints in the middle of the nineteenth century, uprooted their families, and took the long journey to Utah to be nearer to other Mormon communities (Thor 10-14). Although the Spanish Fork Icelanders had little contact with other Icelandic

settlements and less contact with Iceland than the Canadian settlements, Reykjavík opened its arms to Ellen Jameson, who was a popular singer in Utah (Arngrímsson 286; Parsons forthcoming). She headlined a concert at Gamla Bíó on July 13, 1930—a prime spot for the festivities. Scholars have mostly focused on the northern communities in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and North Dakota when discussing Western Icelanders.[17] But Ellen's invitation to perform and her reception in Iceland suggests there may have been a stronger link than previously thought.

The millennial celebration attracted North American women from all sorts of background. Yet, no full-length book materialized out of these visits. Instead, these women turned again to the "safer" spaces. Western Icelander Helen Page Sigurdson provided *The Tribune-Republican* of Greeley, Colorado, with a first-person account of the celebrations ("Iceland, 'Land of Ice and Fire'"); Illinois Spanish teacher Mary Lillian Crea gave a talk on Iceland that autumn to her local chapter of the women's group the Daughters of the Revolution ("D.A.R. Members"); critically-acclaimed author Martha Ostenso Durkin told of her experiences at the celebrations to the Women's Canadian Club ("'Rambles in Iceland'"); and Lillian Schoedler and Dr. Rosalie Morton Slaughter had their trips immortalized in personal letters and unpublished writings. Despite the advancements made through women's rights in the U.S. and Canada in the early twentieth century, Iceland still maintained a place in these "domestic" spaces.

America's Mother

Five years after her return from Iceland, Kitty Cheatham published an article in *The New York Times* in which she praised the national anthem of Iceland for being a *proper* anthem, having criticized "The Star Spangled Banner" for over a decade (Cheatham 1918; Cheatham 1935). In the article, Cheatham echoes these earlier sentiments, claiming: "Nationally, Iceland is America's mother, by right of discovery (the young Icelander, Leif Ericsson, having landed on these shores in the year 1000) – and by right of spiritual idealism based upon the divine demand for 'the glorious liberty of the children of God'" (Cheatham 1935). This connection between Icelanders and North America had been a major part of the millennial celebrations, culminating with the United States government commissioning a statue of Leifur Eiríksson, which still stands today in front Hallgrímskirkja church in Reykjavík, for the occasion.

Americans highlighting this link between North America and Iceland through the medieval "discovery" was nothing new. Many nineteenth-century intellectuals saw similarities between historical or contemporary Americans and the medieval Norse. Rasmus B. Anderson, for instance, drew attention to the democratic nature of medieval Icelandic lawmakers and the "freedom"

enjoyed by Norse explorers, believing these characteristics to foreshadow the American spirit. Anderson claimed in his 1874 book *America Not Discovered by Columbus* that the Norse

> spirit found its way into the Magna Charta of England and into the Declaration of Independence in America. The spirit of the Vikings still survives in the bosoms of Englishmen, Americans and Norsemen, extending their commerce, taking bold positions against tyranny, and producing wonderful internal improvements in these countries (63).

Marie A. Brown highlighted the role Iceland played in the Norse "discovery" in her 1890 book *The Icelandic Discoverers of America: Honor to Whom Honor is Due* and claims that the Norse people represent to her the "principles of freedom," which had "found their fullest expression in the American colonists, leading them to declare independence" (20).

It wasn't simply the spirit of freedom and independence that linked these two people but also the perceived *act* of sailing across an ocean and settling a land in the name of freedom. Chemist Eben Norton Horsford (1818–1893), who claimed to have discovered Leif Ericksson's house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, wrote several books at the end of the century in which he compared the Norse settlement of Iceland to the pilgrims and Puritans of Plymouth (Horsford 54). These comparisons found their way into American travel books about Iceland. As Emily Lethbridge points out, Rev. Phineas Camp Headley and Samuel Kneeland referred to the Icelandic settlers as "Norway Pilgrims" and comparing the Lögberg at Þingvellir to Bunker Hill (Lethbridge 149). Similarly, Adela Orpen, describing Adelia Gates's time in Iceland, calls the settlers of Iceland "Pilgrim Fathers of Iceland" and argues "The settlement of Iceland bears a curious resembles to the settlement of New England. As the Puritans fled to Massachusetts from tyranny at home, so the early Icelanders fled from the despotism of Harold Fairhair" (380). Thorstina Jackson Walters referred to Jón Sigurðsson, a leader in Iceland's push for independence, as "the George Washington of Iceland" (228).

Most twentieth-century American travelers appeared to look for more contemporary similarities between Iceland and North America. Miss Bertha Hatton Smith (1885-?), one of the first tourists to arrive in Iceland after the end of WWI, gave an interview to *The Marion Star* in 1923, and her main takeaway was that Icelanders were just like Americans. In Icelanders' homes, one can find "modern conveniences usually found in American homes," and they had the same "homely touch met with in many New England farmhouses" (Smith 1923). Maurine Robb (1924b), who came around the same time as Smith, suggests that Iceland, despite being "as little like the world as a child is like a grownup...as

charmingly unsophisticated as a wholesome, fresh, ingenious child," is in many ways akin to America. From its house plants to its theatre, Reykjavík seemed, to Robb, familiar to an American. Upon seeing the botanical gardens in the northern town of Akureyri, Robb (1924b) claims that "except for the glorious background of strangely colored mountains, and the National costume worn by the attendant who is showing us over the gardens, it might be Vancouver, or Boston, or any other city in 'civilized' America."

These links and comparisons can also be found in the only book-length travel narrative written by an American woman during this period: Olive Dodge's self-published book, *Sketches in Iceland* (1897). In describing the Norse expansion and settlement of Iceland during the Viking Age, she says: "Brave Norway Pilgrims! Pagans though they were, they had in their veins, like the founders of New England, the best blood of Europe" (12). She calls Thorleifr, the law-speaker who, according to the Old Norse narratives, was instrumental in the Icelandic conversion to Christianity, the "Jefferson of the 10th century" who helped create a republic that "is reflected today from English law and liberty, and reappears in the freer institutions of America" (14). Floki, one of the first Norse explorers to set eyes on the island, and Ingolf, the first settler, are for Dodge "proto-types of those American pioneers who followed the wild birds in their flight into pathless wilderness to found new republics" (49).

Despite these declarations, *Sketches in Iceland* reads more like a travel book. Dodge provides rather vibrant descriptions of the Icelandic countryside:

> Now we cross a broad lava-bed which gleams in the sun's rays like a vast, iron plain, torn and seamed by the convulsions which made it. Beyond, an ocean of peaks spreads away to the horizon. There is a magical effect to the atmosphere of these latitude seen in no other country. The air is so pure; the strong contrasts of black, brown, and red lavas, and the green fields and snowy mountains, make splendid picture even at twenty miles' distance (16).

However, no evidence survives to suggest Olive Dodge actually visited Iceland. As Lethbridge (140-141) has shown, lack of personal experience in Iceland did not stop writers from cobbling together passages from other narratives and publishing it in the spirit of a travel book. Dodge certainly relies on earlier travel books, quoting writers like Lord Dufferin, Bayard Taylor, and William Jackson Hooker, and could simply be recounting their adventures.

Did Olive Dodge breathe in the pure air above the lava bed, or did she put together a creative re-telling of other travelers' experiences? The fact that this question needs to be asked highlights some of the issues of gender and travel at the turn of the century. Dodge, like Mrs. Heinolf, is nearly anonymous. Almost

nothing is known about her except that she lived in Chicago, was an active member in women's groups like the North End Club (*The North End Club* 21). In fact, it is because of a woman's social club that *Sketches in Iceland* even exists. Under the title of the book are the words: "Read before the Every Tuesday," another social club in the Chicago area. The only book solely written about travel in Iceland by an American woman from this period resulted from lectures at a women's social club.

If Dodge wrote her travel book about Iceland without leaving her Chicago neighborhood, it underscores Iceland's place in the domestic sphere in North America. Moreover, Iceland as "America's mother" provides an interesting perspective when viewed through the lens of Domestic feminism: American travelers, like Western Icelanders, were in a sense returning "home" by coming to Iceland. By framing it in this way, even the act of traveling can be construed as remaining within a "safe," domestic space.

Filling in the Gaps

In early May of 1931, the Women's Canadian Club invited a Mrs. Douglas Durkin to come back to their social group to speak once again about Iceland—she had presented in April of that year, having visited Iceland for the millennial celebrations in 1930 ("'Rambles in Iceland'"). Durkin—whose maiden name was Martha Ostenso—had five years previously published her award-winning and most successful of her 30 novels, *Wild Geese*. While *Wild Geese* is still heralded as an essential work of Canadian literature, Ostenso has no archival presence, leaving us to wonder what impact her trip to Iceland may have had on her or what observations caused the Women's Canadian Club to ask her for a second presentation. The lack of surviving material—whether letters, diaries, drafts, or other narratives—is an unfortunate trend among the women who traveled to Iceland during this period.

Anna von Rydingsvärd was an author in her own right, though nowhere near as prolific as Durkin. She lived a very public life in Boston. Someone mistakenly called her husband, Swedish woodcutter Karl von Rydingsvärd, "Baron," and she henceforth adopted the title Baroness. Their divorce was likewise very public, and details could be found throughout the local papers. Despite this, her involvement in Boston clubs and charities, and penning at least three books, very little information about her survives today. In fact, most of her biographical information is found through an online exhibition from the Swedish-American Historical Museum on the life of her husband, "Flowers and Monsters").

Several singers and musicians who visited Iceland also faded into obscurity. Violet Code, the stage name for Western Icelander Fjóla Marine Lárusson, sang

for King Christian X at the 1930 celebrations, performed all over the world and was praised even by Benito Mussoulini (Cogan). Her contemporaries, Norwegian-American Bergljot Tillisch, Western Icelander Leonita Lanzoni (Christine Gunlaugson), and English pianist Cissie Woodward, were all praised for their talents, which they shared with Icelanders on their trips during the 1930s. Yet, all the remains of their careers are snippets from newspapers and some recordings on vintage vinyl websites. Other cultural figures who ventured to Iceland have faced similar fates. Marion Misch was the acting president of the National Council of Jewish Women when she visited Iceland in 1910. Despite her being a world traveler, an educator, an activist for women's rights, and a prominent member of the Rhode Island and national Jewish community, very few if any of Misch's speeches, letters, or diaries remain (Horvitz).

In some cases, the mention of a woman's trip to Iceland in a local newspaper is one of the only remaining shreds of her life. For instance, almost nothing is known about the life of Franklin, Indiana, resident Clara Suckow, other than she donated her house to the Johnson County Historical Museum, served on the county welfare board, and traveled to Iceland for the 1930 millennial celebrations. Educators like Margaret Eddy, Norma Berg, and the many Western Icelandic teachers who visited Iceland in the 1930s left almost no trace of their lives behind. Yet, the local newspapers immortalized the unique vacation destination, thus preserving some small bit of the lives of these women.

The presence of some American women in Iceland is only documented through the pen of a male writer. Grace Russell, for instance, appears dressed in the national costume of Iceland in the opening pages of her husband's travel narrative, *Iceland; Horseback Tour Through Saga Land* (1914). W.S.C. Russell dedicates this book to his wife, Grace, who "twice accompanied me over Icelandic trails" (3). Although Grace later gives at least one lecture in the Boston area, this photo, dedication, and the handful of references in her husband's book are the only evidence that places her in Iceland. We can find similar figures in British travel books. William Bisiker, a member of the Royal Geographical Society, wrote a book in 1902 titled *Across Iceland* about his expedition the year before. In the book, he introduced the readers to his colorful traveling companions, one of which was Jane Alexia Hastie. Miss Hastie, as she is called, was interested in botany and often ventured off alone to collect specimen. More notably, while the men in the group sleep in churches and farmhouses, Miss Hastie slept alone in her tent in almost every kind of weather (Bisiker 46, 130). Bisiker includes a photograph of Hastie fishing for trout in one of Iceland's rivers. Hastie appears to have never written anything about her time in Iceland, and very few pieces of her life exist outside of Bisiker's narrative to give us a fuller picture of Miss Hastie.

Thankfully, some women discussed here have had their works and contributions preserved. Some aspects of Kitty Cheatham's interest in Iceland are preserved at the Tennessee State Library in Knoxville, while Thorstina

Jackson Walters's articles about Iceland can be found at North Dakota State University. Harvard University archived the writings of Lillian Schoedler as an insight into secretary and business life in the early twentieth century, which is how her letters from Iceland were saved. It is important to note, however, that there could be several factors contributing to the lack of archival material. Perhaps no surviving member of the family took the responsibility to donate letters or diaries to an institution; perhaps there were no photographs or writings to donate; perhaps no institution was interested. Moreover, many of the women discussed here, though important members of their communities, were housewives whose impact most likely would not qualify them to have papers archived in a library or museum.

Perhaps most surprising is the lack of archival material from the women who ventured outside of the safe, feminine spaces and wrote about Iceland in more public arenas. Maurine Robb and Anna von Rydingsvärd both published series of articles about their experiences in Iceland and about Icelandic culture in the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Evening News*, respectively. Some lectures about Iceland appeared in a more public setting than women's social clubs. For instance, Josephine Raymond gave a talk in 1913 about her trip to Iceland at the Universalist church in Racine, Wisconsin. This neutral venue likely housed a diverse audience and would have been a step beyond the women's social clubs. These examples demonstrate that North American women were not wholly restricted from a more public, "male" sphere; instead, there appears to be a wide spectrum of women from different economic positions, different ages, and different geographic locations who found Iceland fascinating and shared their experiences in a variety of different ways. From Elizabeth Taylor's scientific exploration of Iceland to Marion E. Harvey dressing up in Icelandic costume and singing Icelandic songs at women's clubs to Kitty Cheatham's romanticization of Leif Eriksson's discovery of America, the women who travelled to Iceland during this period longed to share what they learned—and they often, according to the newspapers, had an eager audience.

NOTES

1. It should be noted here that, although the overall picture of American women visiting Iceland was, indeed, diverse in terms of social class, age, and occupation, the majority, if not all, of the women were white. Although I have searched women of color visiting Iceland, it seems that racial prejudices, discrimination and disadvantages on both sides of the Atlantic meant that there were very few tourists of color until after World War II. With this in mind, when I use the term "American woman," in this context it refers to Anglo-American and white women in the U.S. and Canada.

2. Indeed, other "acceptable" transitional spaces began to appear during the Victorian era, such as the tea-room. Cynthia A. Brandimarte, "'To Make the Whole World Homelike': Gender, Space, and America's Tea Room Movement," *Winterthur Portfolio* 30, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 1-3; Kay Boardman, "The Ideology of Domesticity: The Regulation of the Household Economy in Victorian Women's Magazines," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 150. Some scholars have questioned this idea of separate spheres, whether it existed and whether it hinders the study of gender in the Victorian era. For more, see Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006) and Catherine Lemmer, "Victorian Respectability: The Gendering of Domestic Space," MA Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2007.

3. *The Ladies' Home Companion* magazine, which had several titles before 1886, changed its name to *Woman's Home Companion* in 1896.

4. Several scholars have discussed Morris's interest and experience in Iceland, including Aho, Wawn, Lavinia Greenlaw (2011), Richard L. Harris (1975), Ian Felce (2018), and Wendolyn Weber (2017). Wawn has also treated the journeys of Baring-Gould and Collingswood in *The Vikings and the Victorians*.

5. Pfeiffer calls the Icelanders lazy and ugly, cannot believe they are renowned for their civilization (184), and calls the Icelandic houses "the most disgusting holes that can be imagined." (144) In describing the Icelanders greeting each other with a kiss, Pfeiffer writes that the practice is "not very delightful for a non-Icelander, when one considers their ugly, dirty faces, the snuffy noses of the old people and the filthy little children." (192) Cooper apparently thought this depiction was too severe and edited some of the adjectives out in her translation. Ida Pfeiffer, *Journey to Iceland: and Travels in Sweden and Norway*, trans. Charlotte Fenimore Cooper (London: Richard Bentley, 1852), 74-89. Caroline De Fonblanque, a British tourist who visited Iceland in 1879, continued Ida's disdain for Icelanders by giving herself up "to lively and unprejudiced criticism of the natives" in her book, *Five Weeks in Iceland* (1880). C.A. De Fonblanque, *Five Weeks in Iceland* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880), 24.

6. See also Dimitrios Kassis, *Icelandic Utopia in Victorian Travel Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016).

7. For more on the life of Adelia Gates and her paintings, see Nora Lockshin, "Adelia Gates—Flower Painter or Botanical Illustrator?" *Smithsonian Institution Archives*, March 31, 2011, https://siarchives.si.edu/blog/adelia-gates-flower-painter-or-botanical-illustrator.

8. Botanist Julia Titus Emerson (1877–1962), grand-niece to American author Ralph Waldo Emerson, was another early woman scientist who traveled to Iceland thirteen years after Taylor. In her article "Botanical Observations in Iceland and Spitzbergen," she described Icelandic nature through not only scientific terms but also eloquent language: "it was surprising how level the layers of rock or lava deposits were, seldom tipped or broken though worn by weather into cathedral columns, or when painted by the rosy rays of a low evening sun, turned into veritable Valhallas, fit abodes for northern heroes." Julia Titus Emerson, "Botanical Observations in Iceland and Spitzbergen," *Torreya* 9, no. 3 (March 1909): 49.

9. The temperance movement began in the United States as early as the 1820s. Women in the nineteenth century were seen as the guardians of morality, and, by arguing that alcohol posed a threat to American morals, they were able to participate in temperance organizations. Women became more involved in the movement in the 1850s before temperance really found a footing in American society in the 1870s, culminating with the Women's Crusade and the WCTU. In its early years, the focus was on alcohol reform and prohibition. But as the movement grew and expanded, temperance workers began focusing on other areas of social reform as well. Jed Dannerbaum, "The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy Among American Women," *Journal of Social History* 15, no. 2 (Winter 1981): 235-238.

10. According to the 1895 Report of the WCTU's Twenty-Second Annual Meeting, Ackermann went to Iceland "by invitation of an editor in Ohio who wished her to write up that wondrous island and also to make a reconnaissance for our work." The editor referred to here is that of *The Ladies Home Companion*, which was at that time based in Springfield, Ohio. *Report of the National Woman‘s Christian Temperance Union Twenty-Second Annual Meeting, Held in Music Hall, Baltimore, Maryland, October 18-23, 1895* (Chicago: Woman‘s Temperance Publishing Association, 1895), 113; Akermann also suggests in her article that she travelled on behalf of the magazine. Jessie Ackermann, "Three Women in Iceland: I. The Journey to the Northern Wonderland," *The Ladies Home Companion* (October 1896): 7; "Miss Jessie Ackermann," *The Mercury*, June 29, 1895.

11. Austin stayed up to date with the developments in Iceland, publishing an article on the topic in 1912. See Gertrude Austin, "Iceland and Total Prohibition," *The Englishwoman* (Sept. 1912): 268-278. Republished in *Feminism and the Periodical Press, 1900-1918*, Vol. II, ed. Lucy Delap, Maria DiCenzo, and Leila Ryan (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). Many thanks to Lucy Delap for assisting me with research on Gertrude Austin.

12. Raymond-Whitcomb advertisement found in *The New York Tribune*, April 17, 1921.

13. Robb's battalion was actually bombed by German fighters, and several women died. Although Robb was away for training during the attack she said of her female comrades: "You would be so proud of your sex if you could see and know how magnificently the women have acted. The only ones who reported late for duty after the night when damage was done were those who had no clothes to wear." "Winnipeg Girl Tells How Members of her Corps Were Killed," *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune*, July 13, 1918.

14. Western Icelander Fjóla Marine Hjörtusdóttir, bettern known by her stage name Violet Code, is reportedly the first to record Icelandic folk songs onto a phonograph record. James Pearson, "Knights of the Footlights," *Evening Dispatch*, October 16, 1931.

15. For more on Anderson's "mission" to inform Americans of the Norse "discovery," see Bergur Þorgeirsson, "Norwegian-American 'missions of education' and Old Norse literature," in *From Iceland to the Americas: Vinland and Historical Imagination*, eds. Jón Karl Helgason and Tim William Machan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020) and J. M. Mancini, "Discovering Viking America," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 4 (Summer 2002): 868-907.

16. Another fascinating look into the Icelandic-American experience is Hólmfríður Árndóttir's memoir, *When I was a Girl in Iceland* (1919). Hólmfríður grew up in Kálfsstaðir in the north of Iceland but moved to North America as an adult. In the Introduction, she reminds her readers: "The Icelanders discovered America and lost it again; let now the Americans discover Iceland and never lose sight of it again." Hólmfríður Árndóttir, *When I was a Girl in Iceland* (Boston: Lothrop, Lee & Shepherd, 1919), vi.

17. Spanish Fork is rarely metioned in scholarship about Western Icelanders. But as Guuðjón Argrímsson points out, the Iceladic Mormons isolated themselves and were more concerned with their religious ties than their cultural ones. Significantly, the Heritage Language Project chose not to include the Spanish Fork community in its research. See Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, Höskuldur Thráinsson, and Úlfar Bragason, eds., *Icelandic Heritage in North America* (Winnipeg: Univerity of Manitoba Press, 2023).

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