

**Ms 93**

**MILLER, Sadie (Sarah) G., diaries. 3.8 l.f. (30 v.)**

**Abstract:** Sadie G. Miller was a Seattle housewife.

**Biography:** Sadie (Sarah) Grace Miller (1906-1996), was a Seattle housewife, and, for a number of years, was employed as clerk at Rhodes Department Store in Seattle. In April 1929, just before the onset of the Great Depression, she married Victor Miller.

For several years Miller's life was centered on her role as caregiver for her chronically ill mother. Her husband, Victor, a commander in the U.S. Coast Guard, was domineering and demanding and in frequent need of "vacations." Toward the end of his life he developed a severe dementia and Sadie experienced extremely trying times coping with his deteriorating condition and combative behavior. In the later diaries she constantly refers to him derisively as. "His nibs." After his death in 1979 she became active in a church, but widowhood was both a relief and a burden for her.

**Scope and content:** Miller was a diligent diarist and these diaries are the observations of a person who could truly be termed an "ordinary person." In a forthright manner she chronicles, in almost daily entries, the details of her trials and tribulations, joys and sadness, and provides an interesting and revealing perspective on the day-to-day life of an American housewife from the mid-1930s to the early 1980s.

Throughout all of the diaries Miller taped, pasted, or just inserted newspaper clippings, business cards, funeral notices, health tips, and other information that interested her, with a particular focus is health and finances.

A few selected quotes are included to provide some indication of the scope and tone of the diaries.

**Inclusive dates:** 1934-1983

**Restrictions:** None

**Volume:** 3.8 l.f. (30 v.)

**Accession number:** 2001.72

### **Box 1 Diaries**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
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1	Diary, August 1934-April 1940. 1/3/37 "Well, today beyond a doubt finishes my Holiday work at Rhodes Dept. Store. Having worked every day & every night except New Years as well as ten hours today, which is Sunday. After standing ten hours my legs feel like logs. Victor is still not working because of the strike." 11/13/39 "Last night turned out to be a humdinger. A major earthquake struck Seattle and
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adjacent territory 200 miles around. Due to the rolling motion instead of short jerks lessened the damage, altho Seattle suffered upwards to a million \$ damage & only two injuries." 11/20/39 "Ten years ago tonite Victor & I were married on a Wednesday night & Victor is in Alaska and I sit in my ap't in Seattle. It has been an eventful 10 years, some ups but mostly downs...."

- 2 Diary, January 1941-December 1945. 12/7/41 U.S.A. declared war on Japan & etc. this A.M. Thus tonite we have an all black out as well as no transportation after 10 o'clock and all radios are silent from 7 o'clock until the tomorrows A.M. Only one person in congress, a woman, voted no to the war vote. God Bless her."
- 3 Diary, 1946- November 1950
- 4 Diary, December 1950-November 1953
- 5 Diary, 1954-1956
- 6 Diary, 1957-March 1959
- 7 Diary, April-December 1959
- 8 Diary, 1960
- 9 Diary, 1961. 11/11 Detailed entries about her mother's death. "The day ends and, oh, how I miss being able to speak in confidence to some one, especially mother Ada. A man sees only his own view-point a[nd] cares less how deeply he hurts thoes [sic.] that would love him most. Little does he know that his actions are forever set and score so deeply."
- 10 Diary, 1962
- 11 Diary, 1963
- 12 Diary, 1964

## **Box 2 Diaries**

- 1 Diary, 1965
- 2 Diary, 1966
- 3 Diary, 1967
- 4 Diary, 1968
- 5 Diary, 1969
- 6 Diary, 1970
- 7 Diary, 1971
- 8 Diary, 1972
- 9 Diary, 1973
- 10 Diary, 1974
- 11 Diary, 1975.

- 12            Diary, 1976. Daily life. Many mentions of U.S. Bicentennial celebrations. Much domestic detail.

**Box 3    Diaries**

- 1            Diary, 1977. Details of daily life. Victor's decline begins.
- 2            Diary, 1978. Chronicles Victor's decline and her anguish at dealing with his declining health and mental status. 9/28 "His nibs had tater totes [sic.] plus squash and salad and sautéed salmon, hot rolls, and cantaloupe for desert. And I worked all afternoon to get it all prepared. Even with all that time and chores to get all prepared His nibs doesn't or didn't think it was so good. He eats so slow all is ice cold before he gets it finished. It is not a labor of love, but a labor of hard work & no reward, although I am not looking for a reward." 12/4 "He thinks he's just a glorified guest in this house & that he gives the rules and regulations. I can't even get out of the house a few minutes. I wonder how long this will go on. The past two nights have gone to bed bawling my eyes out and I can't even sleep."
- 3            Diary, 1980 Documents her life as a widow and her declining health. 9/19 "A very dark-dark morning, as dark as my mind & believe I am having very very dark days these days."
- 4            Diary, 1981. Declining health. Joins a church. Finds \$11,000 cash her mother had hidden away for Sadie.
- 5            Diary, 1983. Entries become less frequent and more repetitive. The days of her life just seem to drag.
- 6            Scrapbook. Contains largely undated newspaper clippings of items of interest to Miller. Mostly recipes, but also includes useful household tips and other odd bits of information.