These are records of the Presbyterian Church at Ironton in Iron County, Missouri, which was organized as part of the Potosi Presbytery in 1855. The records include minutes of meetings of the church Session, the Board of Trustees, and the congregation, registers of membership, and records of the women’s auxiliary societies.

The First Presbyterian Church of Ironton was organized in September 1855. First called the Arcadia Church, the name was changed in May 1860. The church grew out of earlier assemblies in the Arcadia Valley by settlers drawn by the Iron Mountain speculation of 1837-1838. The first congregation consisted of Col. Cyrus Russell, Augustus Pease, Nathan Trumbull, and their families, all of whom were former residents of Connecticut. They began meeting in 1841 or 1842, adopting the articles of faith and code of the Congregational Church of Somers, Conn. The members had benefit of a pastor only occasionally. In 1853 the church obtained the services of the Rev. David Paxton from Farmington. Under his guidance the church was reorganized and application was made for membership in the Potosi Presbytery in 1855. Henry P. Russell and John P. Hayden were elected elders.

The town of Ironton was platted in 1857 by H. N. Tong and David Carson. They donated lots in 1860 for a church site. Construction began the same year under the supervision of Henry P. Russell, but completion was delayed until 1868 by the Civil War and its effects. The original building stood until 1901, when it was razed and replaced by the present structure. It was remodeled in 1966.

The records of the Ironton Church consist of those pertaining to the church and its governing bodies, and those regarding the activities of the women’s auxiliaries. The records of the church include minutes of meetings of the Session, the congregation, and the trustees, membership data, and the records of the treasurer. The earliest record is for a meeting held in 1856, some months after the church was organized. The early period which led to the formation of the church is detailed in “Origin and Progress of the First Presbyterian Church of Ironton, Missouri,” a historical sketch written sometime in the 1870s. This volume and the earliest of the other records contain useful information on the early settlers of the Arcadia Valley, particularly Cyrus Russell and his family.

The earliest women’s auxiliary of the church was the Ladies Missionary Society, formed sometime in the 1880s. The name was changed in 1896 to the Woman’s Missionary Society, and in 1917 to the Missionary-Aid Society. The change in 1917 marked the merger of the mission group with the Ladies of the Church. After a hiatus in 1918, the women reorganized as the Gleaners in 1919. The auxiliary societies sponsored missionary, charitable, and social activities, and worked closely with the trustees in church maintenance and fund-raising. Records for the auxiliary societies are available for 1886 through 1986.

The Ironton church records reveal concerns common to many small churches, such as the need to attract young members and secure the services of a full-time pastor, and to raise money enough to maintain and improve the church buildings. The records also illustrate family and societal relationships in an early industrial area of Missouri.
church Session, the Board of Trustees, and the congregation, registers of membership, and records of the women’s auxiliary societies.

Volumes 1-6: Historical sketch and minutes of sessions, 1856-1969.

Volume 1: “Origin and progress of the First Presbyterian Church of Ironton, Mo.,” ca. 1870s (30 pages).
Volume 3: Minutes of session, 1875-1899 (337 pages).

Volumes 7-9: Minutes of meetings of the congregation, and Board of Trustees, 1856-1916.

Volume 7: Minutes of congregational meetings, 1856-1916 (14 pages).
Volume 8: Minutes of congregational meetings, 1863-1907 (108 pages).
Volume 9: Records of the Board of Trustees, 1873-1914 (186 pages).


Volume 10: Records of members and contributors, 1856-1865 (111 pages).

Volumes 12-19: Records of the Treasurer, 1873-1926.

Volume 14: Treasurer’s record book, 1897-1900 (198 pages).


Volume 33: Minutes, 1959 (23 pages).

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