

EXHIBIT

DATE 2/9/05

HB 9

Ms. Lambert, the Prairie County Museum is asking you to present our request to the Committee, for a grant to catalogue the Evelyn Cameron photos. No one from our group is able to come to Helena at this time. We appreciate your interest in our Museum and the Cameron Gallery here in Terry. Thank you. The following is what we would say if we were there.

We are asking for a grant to catalogue the Evelyn Cameron photos now housed at the Montana Historical Society and at the Prairie County Museum. These images will then be placed on a website so that everyone can view them and decide whether they would like to own one or perhaps they will decide to come to Terry to view the "real thing" at our Museum and Gallery. We have about 50 11X14 framed photos in the Gallery, and some 2000 5x7's in albums at the Museum.

Everyone in our community will benefit when folks come to Terry since they will undoubtedly spend money overtown. Like other eastern Montana towns, Terry needs a boost.

The Evelyn Cameron photos are available today as the result of the foresight and energies of three ladies- two from this area and one from New York. EVELYN CAMERON taught herself photography and documented all areas of pioneer life in the area. JANET WILLIAMS, Evelyn's neighbor and dear friend, preserved and fiercely protected Evelyn's negatives for 50 years after Evelyn's death in 1928. She was one of the few who recognized the value of the photos at the time. DONNA LUCEY, the New York author, made the world aware of the precious horde, when she published her book, PHOTOGRAPHING MONTANA, after she persuaded Janet that the time had come to release the use of the negatives. After Donna had used the ones she wanted for her book, Janet asked the Prairie County Museum to store the negatives in our vault. Realizing that we were poorly prepared to care for such a valuable, but perishable, asset, we agreed that they should be housed at the State Library, where they remain today, as a gift from Janet's heirs, particularly her niece and Mr Deppe. The Historical Society has been generous in giving a copy of each print and a set of the first enlargements used in a traveling exhibit to the Prairie County Museum.

We feel that the photos are a rare educational opportunity for young and old alike. Each springtime the Terry school children, with their teachers, visit our Museum and Gallery. They often bring their parents in later to see what they had seen.

The Museum gets many requests for copies of photos of "my grandfather" or "uncle" who was with the "XIT", etc. Since most ordinary families at the time did not own a camera, these photos are especially appreciated. We anticipate more requests after the website is up and running. The West, and especially Montana, is of interest to many world wide.

*Lyonna Green, Ruth Dranks  
Carol Larsen, Janice Madden*

**C&A Grant #1133**  
**Prairie County Museum: Evelyn Cameron Project**

Evelyn J. Cameron was a pioneer woman photographer. Evelyn and her husband, Ewen S. Cameron, were ranchers in eastern Montana from the early 1890s through the 1920s. The photographs and writings of Evelyn Cameron offer exceptional documentation of the life and times of eastern Montana homesteaders in a formative period of Montana history.

Cultural and Aesthetic Grant #1133 will provide funds for researchers to gather local knowledge and expertise about the content and subjects of Evelyn Cameron's photography and catalog it so that it is more widely available and accessible.

If fully funded, this grant will also create a virtual exhibit of Evelyn Cameron's photographs on the worldwide web. This exhibit will prominently feature the spectacular photography of one of the West's foremost women photographers and highlight the important contributions of eastern Montana homesteading families.

The virtual exhibit and the online catalog records will promote the important role of Prairie County in Montana's history and encourage people to visit the Prairie County Museum and Evelyn Cameron Gallery in Terry, Montana.

**Evelyn Cameron Collection  
of the  
Montana Historical Society**

The Montana Historical Society has enjoyed a long partnership with the Prairie County Museum in Terry. For example, the Montana Historical Society made copies of all 2000 images and gifted these to the Prairie County Museum. We have also provided advice on cataloging and caring for the other Cameron artifacts and manuscripts in their care.

The Montana Historical Society's Evelyn Cameron photograph collection consists of vintage prints, negatives, and copy prints of over 2000 photographic images.

In 1990-91 the Montana Historical Society also received a large collection of other materials from Evelyn and Ewen Cameron including:

- 1) letters, postcards, and greeting cards (1903-1929)
- 2) Evelyn Cameron's diaries (35 volumes written between 1893-1928)
- 3) Evelyn's journal, containing notes, poems, quotations, and clippings
- 4) a scrapbook (1900-1915) containing clippings on wildlife
- 5) 7 articles (1905-1914) written by Ewen Cameron
- 6) various manuscripts (1904-1912) written by Ewen Cameron
- 7) miscellaneous homestead papers (1903-1917)

Full funding of C&A Grant #1133 will allow the Montana Historical Society to assist the Prairie County Museum in identifying all of the subjects and images in the Evelyn Cameron photograph collection, catalog those images into the Montana Shared Library Catalog, and promote visitation to the Evelyn Cameron Gallery in Terry, Montana.

# Montana State Legislature

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**The following exhibit is a booklet that exceeds the 5-page limit therefore it cannot be scanned. The booklets' cover has been scanned to help you when requesting information. The exhibit is on file at the Montana Historical Society and can be viewed there.**

Montana Historical Society Archives, 225 N. Roberts, Helena, MT 59620-1201; phone (406) 444-4774. For minutes in paper format, please contact the Montana State Law Library, Justice Building, 215 N. Sanders, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-3660. Tapes and exhibits are also available at the Historical Society (tapes are retained for five years). Scanning done by: Susie Hamilton

EXHIBIT 1  
DATE 2905  
# 9

# Photographing Montana, 1894-1928

## The World of Evelyn Cameron



Evelyn Cameron, Self-portrait

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