Guide to the Dan De Quille Papers, [ca. 1860-1914]

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Note
Arts and Humanities --Literature --American Literature
History --History, United States (excluding California) --History,
Nevada
Geographical (By Place) --United States (excluding California) --Nevada
Collection Title: Dan De Quille Papers,
Date (inclusive): [ca. 1860-1914]
Collection Number: BANC MSS P-G 246
Creator: De Quille, Dan, 1829-1898
Extent: Number of containers: 3 boxes, 2 cartons, 1 oversize folder
Repository: The Bancroft Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000
Physical Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.
Abstract: Letters concerning the Territorial Enterprise, Mark Twain, and the writing of his book on the Big Bonanza; manuscripts of sketches written for newspapers and magazines; clippings; notes and notebooks; a few papers of other members of his family. The correspondence consists of a letter to his brother-in-law, Dr. J.M. Benjamin, Omega, California, 1860; 18 to his sister Lou (Mrs. Benjamin), 1874-1885; one by his daughter Mell to Mrs. Benjamin, 1878; and 37 letters received, 1875-1897; from Hiram C. Clark, 1878; Samuel Clemens ("Mark Twain") (3), 1864-1875; E.D. Cope, 1880; Amos J. Cummings (2), 1885-1886; Wells Drury, 1897; James G. Fair, 1875; L.W. Ferris, 1875; Henry J. Ford (2), 1887; Joseph Wasson, 1880; John Greenleaf Whittier, 1897; and B.B. Wiley (1887). With the Twain letters is a first draft of Twain's letter to W.K. Cutler, Virginia, May 28, 1864, offering to accept a challenge to a duel, and the cover of Twain's wedding announcement, with remarks to "Dan." Accompanying the correspondence are drafts of five letters written by his daughter, Lura G. Wright, from Newport, Oregon, ca. 1914-1915, in connection with proposals of George Wharton James to publish Dan DeQuille's sketches, a letter from her cousin "Harry," and from Edward E. Hale, Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1901, and biographical sketch of Wright. Miscellaneous family papers include four Civil War diaries written by Wright's brother, John M.
Wright (1836-1918), while serving as a private in the Second Iowa Cavalry, December 9, 1861-September 23, 1864. He campaigned in Missouri, Tennessee, and Mississippi, fought at Corinth, and engaged in many skirmishes against Nathan Bedford Forrest. With the diaries are his honorable discharge, Davenport, Iowa, October 3, 1864; a deed to a lot at Newport, Oregon, 1910; and a deed to a cemetery plot at Newport 1914. Another diary, by Mrs. Benjamin, July 28-September 1, 1879, and July 29-August 5, 1880, describes vacation trips to the Eastern states and Minnesota from West Liberty, Iowa.

Languages Represented: English

Access
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Preferred Citation
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Drawings transferred to BANC PIC 1953.007--A.

Scope and Content
William Wright, better known by his pseudonym, Dan De Quille, was born in Knox County, Ohio, in 1829. His family moved to Iowa when he was 18 and settled near West Liberty. In 1857, De Quille left for California and prospected for gold in Nevada County, Mariposa and the Mono Lake District. The excitement of the silver discovery in the Washoe Valley, however, drew him to Nevada in 1860. For a short time he worked in the Yellow Jacket Point Mine at Silver City. In 1862, he joined the staff of The Territorial Enterprise, which was published in Virginia City, and it was in journalism he found his niche. He became one of the best known men on the Comstock, and through his contributions to various periodicals, one of the most widely read journalists in the West. He wrote portions of Angel's History of Nevada and in 1884, the article on Nevada for the 10th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. He also wrote two books, History of the Big Bonanza (Hartford, 1876) and A History of the Comstock Silver Lode Mines, a paper bound guide book designed to be sold on the overland trains. After the demise of the Enterprise in 1893, De Quille stayed on a short time at Virginia City, writing for the Salt Lake City Tribune and serving as Nevada correspondent for other papers. He then went to West Liberty, Iowa, to stay with his daughter and De Quille died there March 16, 1898.

De Quille's papers were given to Bancroft Library by Henry L. Day in November 1953, through the courtesy of Joel E. Ferris. The collection, which includes also a few papers of other members of the Wright Family (his brother, John; sister, Lou Benjamin; and daughter, Lou) covers the period 1860-1914. It consists of correspondence relating chiefly to the writing of the book, History of the Big Bonanza, his work on The Territorial Enterprise and his association with Mark Twain; manuscripts of sketches written for newspapers and magazines; notes and notebooks; a few of his drawings; and an extensive collection of clippings, including his contributions to various periodicals. The family papers include his brother's Civil War diary, a short biographical sketch of De Quille written by his daughter, Lou, and drafts of her letters relating to the proposed publication of some of her father's sketches. Cards have been placed in the manuscripts catalog and shelf list for major correspondents and other items of note.

Box 1

Correspondence, ca. 1860-1897
Letters written to William Wright.

Additional Note
Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent. Single letters have been placed in an alphabetical miscellany; several letters from any one correspondent in special folders. Included are letters for James G. Bennett, Hiram C. Clark, Samuel L. Clemens, Edward D. Cope, Amos Jay Cummings, Philipp Deidesheimer, Wells Drury, James G. Fair, Henry J. Ford, Joseph T. Goodman, Charles C. Goodwin, I. E. James, Samuel S. McClure, John W. Mackay, Bill Nye and John Greenleaf Whittier.
Letters written by William Wright, 1860-1885

Additional Note
20 letters arranged chronologically. The first is addressed to his brother-in-law, J. M. Benjamin and the rest to his sister, Lou Wright Benjamin.

Letter from Edward Everett Hale to unknown correspondent, Aug 14, 1901. Calling cards, envelopes, etc.

Manuscripts of sketches written for newspapers and magazines. Arranged alphabetically by title:
- A-De
- Df-Z

Notes, ideas for stories and articles, etc.

Additional Note
Chiefly in Wright's handwriting. Special folders for the following: Siberia and Mongolia, silver and politics, Piute Indians, Inyo Co., earthquakes, linguistics.

Notebook containing record of articles and stories sent to newspapers, n.d.
Folder of drawings done by Wright.

Additional Note
(Transferred to Pictorial Collection BANC PIC 1953.007--A.)

Maps of the Comstock Lode

Additional Note
Included are a map drawn by Wright and a printed map designed and engraved by Deaves and Oliver.

Papers of other members of the Wright family.

Lou Wright Benjamin's diary, July 1879-Aug 1880.

Additional Note
Chiefly concerning her trip East from West Liberty, Iowa, to New York and Boston.

Mell Wright's letter to her aunt, Lou W. Benjamin, Mar 26, 1878.

Additional Note
Written from Virginia City, Nevada.

John M. Wright's Civil War diary and a few miscellaneous papers.

Lou G. Wright's papers.

Additional Note
Included are drafts of letters to George Wharton James, Wells Drury and others pertaining to the publication of some sketches written by her father; a biographical sketch of Wright and notes on his ancestry, written by Miss Wright.

Clippings

Additional Note
Included are clippings of his writings and clippings collected by Wright on various subjects. Subject clippings are in envelopes which bear Wright's notations.

Clippings

Additional Note
Included are additional subject clippings and miscellaneous clippings.

Printed items. Included are the following:
- A History of the Comstock Silver Lode and Mines by Dan De Quille
- Laws of the Territory of Nevada, 1863 and 1864
Bennett, James Gordon, 1841-1918
Clark, Hiram C.
  Letter, Jan 29, 1878.
Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910
  Letters, 1864-1875 (4). Include letter addressed to W. K. Cutler, with Wright's comments on verso.
Cope, Edward Drinker, 1840-1897
  Letter, Sept 18, 1880.
Cummings, Amos Jay, 1841-1902
  Letters, 1885-1886 (2).
Deidesheimer, Philipp, 1832-
  Letter, Oct 20, 1891.
Drury, Wells, 1851-1932
  Letters, 1897 (2). One form letter, written as president, Press Club of San Francisco.
Fair, James Graham, 1831-1894
  Letter, Aug 5, 1875.
Ford, Henry Jones, 1851-1925
  Letters, 1887 (2). Written as managing editor of the Lorborn Publishing Company.
Goodman, Joseph T., 1838-1917
  Letters, 1875-1884 (2).
Goodwin, Charles Carroll, 1832-1917
  Letters, 1880-1887 (6).
Hale, Edward Everett, 1822-1909
  Letter, Aug 14, 1901.
James, Isaac E., 1830-
  Letter, Aug 4, 1875.
Jones, Samuel L.
McClure, Samuel Sidney, 1857-1949
  Letter, Oct 16, 1886.
Mackay, John William, 1831-1902
  Letters, 1875 and n.d. (2).
Nye, Edgar Wilson, 1850-1896
Society for Psychical Research. American Branch.
  Letters, 1892-1893 (2). Concerning psychical experience involving Mark Twain.
Wasson, Joseph
  Letter, July 18, 1885. Written as superintendent, Homer Mill and Mining Co.
Whittier, John Greenleaf, 1807-1892
  Letter, Apr 11, 1879.
Wright, John M., ca. 1836-1918
Wright, Lou G.
  [Miscellaneous papers]. Included are drafts of letters to George Wharton James and Wells Drury, ca. 1914, concerning publication of sketches written by her father; a biographical sketch of her father; and notes on his ancestry.