
Guide to the James A. Clayton Family Papers, circa 1850-1905 Part of the Edith C. Smith Photograph Collection

Guide prepared by Daniel Jarvis

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Daniel Jarvis

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Descriptive Summary

Title: James A. Clayton Family Papers

Date (inclusive): 1850-1905

Collection Number: ECS03.06

Creator: James A. Clayton Family

Extent: Containers: 2 boxes

Volume: 1.5 cubic feet Selected online items available

Repository: Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History, San Jose State University
San Jose, California

Abstract: The James A. Clayton Family Papers is a collection of correspondence and photographs that document life in the Clayton family of Santa Clara County during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The family correspondence records aspects of life events and personal dynamics among its members; this is especially the case with James A. Clayton and his wife Anna.

Language of Material: All material is in English.

 <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/items/ark:/13030/kt4d5nf32t>

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], James A. Clayton Family Papers, ECS03.08, Edith C. Smith Photograph Collection, Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History, San Jose State University, San Jose, California

Acquisition Information

The James A. Clayton Family Papers were donated to the Sourisseau Academy by the Edith Corinne Smith Trust in 2009. The collection appears to have been part of the Florence Gates Baldwin estate, granddaughter of James and Anna Clayton.

Biographical Note

James A. Clayton was born 20 Oct 1831 in Bugsworth, Derbyshire, England, and died 1896 in Los Angeles, CA. He married Anna Louinia Thomson in March 1869, daughter of Robert Thomson and Amy Brown. She was born June 1843 in Richmond, Indiana, and died 19 Feb 1917 in San Jose, Santa Clara Co., CA.

In 1853, Clayton became permanently identified with Santa Clara where he operated a photography studio. He subsequently moved the studio to San Jose; and in the late 1850s, he relocated his family to San Jose. While in Santa Clara, Clayton and John B. Hewston started the city's first temperance movement. Clayton was also one of the region's first leaders to initiate the establishment of a local YMCA. In 1861, Clayton was elected county clerk on the Republican ticket and was elected again in 1863, while continuing to operate his photograph studio. In 1867, he entered the real estate business in San Jose and remained active in that profession until his death in 1896.

Prior to 1887, most property available for purchase in Santa Clara Valley passed through his hands at least once. Clayton started the first abstract and title business in Santa Clara County, one of the first in the state. He became a promoter and partial owner of the first electric lighting plant in the county and was one of the founders of the First National Bank of San Jose in 1874. He later served as its president for many years. After Clayton had been in the realty business several years, he started to promote the Santa Clara Valley with illustrated literature that was distributed widely in the American Mid-West.

James and Anna Clayton had seven children: Mary E., married to Caroll W. Gates and lived in Los Angeles; Edward W., for many years associated with his father and later with the James A. Clayton Company real estate business; Willis C., also connected with James A. Clayton Company real estate interests and one of the presidents of the First National Bank of San Jose; Ethel, a graduate from the University of the Pacific and associate with her father's company; Grace Elizabeth, who died in infancy; John J.; and Florence.

Excerpt adapted from Eugene T. Sawyers' *History of Santa Clara County, California*, (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co, 1922), pp 803.

Indexing Terms

The following terms may be used to index this collection.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Clayton, James A. (1831-1896)

Correspondence

James A. Clayton Family

Photograph Albums--California--Santa Clara County (Calif.)--19th Century

Real estate business--California--Santa Clara County (Calif.)--19th Century

Santa Clara County (Calif.)

Tomas, Anna Louinia (1843-1917)

Scope and Content

The James A. Clayton Family Papers is composed of personal letters and photographs from the Clayton family in Santa Clara County during the latter half of the 19th century. The papers are divided into two series: Series I dates from 1850 to 1896 and contains letters and postcards between James A. Clayton, his wife Anna, and their children. Series II contains the Clayton family photograph album, which spans the latter half of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the twentieth century. The majority of these photographs consist of portraits of immediate and extended family members, along with friends and associates.

Arrangement of the James A. Clayton Papers

The papers are arranged into two series:

Series I: Correspondence, 1850-1896

Series II: Photographs, 1850-1905












Series I **Correspondence 1850-1896****Physical Description:** 14 folders**Series I Description:**



Series I contains the correspondence between members of the Clayton family, arranged chronologically by year, if given. James Clayton wrote much of this correspondence to his wife while he was traveling. There are also numerous letters from the Clayton children to their parents, with one group of letters recounting a visit to the Yosemite Valley. Two additional documents worth mentioning, since they are not correspondence, are filed with Series I for the sake of simplicity. The first item is located in the folder one and consists of a court document dated March 26, 1863. In this document Clayton certifies the motion of a defendant to "strike out portions of complaint" in the court case. The second item, located in the folder two, is a basic receipt for the purchase of a piano from a merchant in San Francisco.

Box 1, Folder 1	1850-1869
Box 1, Folder 2	1870-1872
Box 1, Folder 3	1873-1878
Box 1, Folder 4	1881-1882
Box 1, Folder 5	1882-1884
Box 1, Folder 6	1884-1885
Box 1, Folder 7	1885-1887
Box 1, Folder 8	1888-1892
Box 1, Folder 9	1892
Box 1, Folder 10	1893
Box 1, Folder 11	1894
Box 1, Folder 12	1895-1896
Box 1, Folder 13	1896
Box 1, Folder 14	Undated

SERIES II **Photographs Circa 1850-1905****Physical Description:** 107 photographs**Series II Description**

Series II contains the Clayton family photograph album, and with the exception of several photographs stored separately, is kept in its original order. Three of the photographs display two of the family residences, their early home on N. Market Street and later home on N. First Street. In one of the photos James A. Clayton is pictured in his garden at their home on N. First Street. Most of the photographs, however, display individual and group portraits of immediate and extended family members.

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- ecs2004 **Florence Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt8z09s20h>
- ecs2005 **James A. Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt8r29s3z5>
- ecs2006 **Edward William Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt1p3036wd>
- ecs2007 **Willis Sherman Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt4j49r92m>
- ecs2008 **Mary Emma Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt629036kc>
- ecs2009 **Ethel Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt3f59r9kd>
- ecs2010 **John J. Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt100036d4>
- ecs2011 **James A. Clayton (2 copies)**  <ark:/13030/kt1199r6r9>
- ecs2012 **Anna S. Clayton (2 copies)**  <ark:/13030/kt4779s04s>
- ecs2013 **Bradley & Jean Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt0d5nf2wh>
- ecs2014 **Edna Clayton, 1890-1908**  <ark:/13030/kt1g5037hw>
- ecs2015 **Flora Haskell**  <ark:/13030/kt9q5041fw>
- ecs2016 **Allie Haskell**  <ark:/13030/kt5199s1dd>
- ecs2017 **Elijah Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt4w10370p>
- ecs2018 **Hannah J. Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt909nf7mz>
- ecs2019 **Unidentified Woman**  <ark:/13030/kt6f59s214>
- ecs2020 **Unidentified Man**  <ark:/13030/kt187034h4>
- ecs2021 **Mrs. John Clayton**  <ark:/13030/kt6m3nf5vm>

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ecs2023 **Susan Clayton**  [ark:/13030/kt8f59s30q](https://n2t.org/ark:/13030/kt8f59s30q)
ecs2024 **Three Haskell Brothers. Henry, Daniel, and third unidentified brother**  [ark:/13030/kt0q2nf196](https://n2t.org/ark:/13030/kt0q2nf196)
ecs2025 **Flora, Allie, & Walter Haskell**  [ark:/13030/kt1g5037jd](https://n2t.org/ark:/13030/kt1g5037jd)
ecs2026 **Aunt Alvana Haskell**  [ark:/13030/kt7x0nf7st](https://n2t.org/ark:/13030/kt7x0nf7st)
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