Finding Aid for the Genay Family Correspondence D19xx.999

Finding aid prepared by Hilary E. Gordon
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Spring 2010
Title: Genay Family Correspondence.
Collection number: D19xx.999
Contributing Institution: Denison Library Special Collections and Archives
Scripps College
1090 Columbia Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711
Language of Materials: Unless otherwise noted the materials are written in French, with a very small amount of materials in English.
Physical Description: 1 box
Date (inclusive): 1917-1935.
Abstract: Correspondence, photographs, greetings, and published ephemera, 1917-1935, primarily illustrating the World War I Era narrative of the French Genay family and their involvement with the charitable organization, Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine].
creator: Genay family
Access
Collection is available for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
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Acquisitions Information
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Processed by Hilary E. Gordon for Archival Studies 311, Claremont Graduate University, Spring 2010; revised by Michael P. Palmer, MLIS, April 2011.
History
The Genay Family Correspondence is composed almost entirely of the correspondence of Madame L. Genay, widow of Captain Eugene Genay, and her elder daughter, Camille (1901-circa 1925), with an American friend, Miss Mildred Veitch (later Mrs. R. K. West). The family, which included a younger daughter, Marie Louise, resided in Versailles, and maintained a country home in the village of Saint-Sauveur. Captain Genay was killed in April 1915, fighting for the Allies in Belgium. Miss Veitch acted as a benefactor to the family through an organization with which all of the women were involved, the Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine]. Because of Madame Genay’s work as a teacher and the family’s involvement in charitable war efforts, the women were connected to the events around them and are able to provide unique insights into life in wartime France, women’s war roles, American aid to foreign families, and many others. The bulk of the material focuses on the war years.
Scope and Contents
The materials that constitute the Genay Family Correspondence describe and illustrate the family’s involvement in events surrounding World War I and the subsequent years. The collection consists primarily of correspondence between Camille Genay and Mildred Veitch, with a few letters from Madame L. Genay, Camille's mother. These letters, postcards, and greeting cards contain descriptions of the local war efforts and conditions in France as well as the personal narrative of the Genay family. The postcards themselves depict contemporary war events and scenes. Photographs originally included with the correspondence depict both the Genay family and the French landscape during the war years. The remaining published item in the collection relates to the Genay women’s involvement with the organization Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine]. This wartime charitable organization matched French orphans with support systems and benefactors in the United States and worked to publicize the role of cooperation between the Allied Nations.
Arrangement
The Genay Family Collection is arranged into four series:
Series 1: Correspondence
Series 2: Postcards and Greeting Cards
Series 3: Published Materials
Series 4: Photographs
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Fatherless Children of France (Organization).
Veitch, Mildred
Correspondence
Photographs
World War, 1914-1918--France

Box 1, Folder 1
Notification and letter to Madame L. Genay of the death of her husband, Captain Genay, on the Belgian front. April 6 and 11, 1915.

Language of Material: French and English.
Extent: 4 sheets.
Contents
On a single sheet: Lt. Col Barthelemy, Commandant of the 79th Territorial Regiment of Infantry, to the Secretary General of the Prefecture of Seine-et-Oise, announcing the death on April 3rd of Captain Genay, commandant of the 7th company; Cadier, Lt-Tresorier of the 79th Territorial Regiment of Infantry, to Madame Genay, detailing the circumstances of her husband's death. 3 sheets of a typed incomplete translation of both French letters.

Box 1, Folder 2
Extent: 1 page.
Contents
Madame L. Genay writes to "Mademoiselle", Miss M. Veitch. Letter begins with greetings and thanks for the help during the hard times since the beginning of the war. Promises that Camille will be writing more often soon, after her exams and during her vacation.

Box 1, Folder 3
Extent: 1 1/2 pages.
Contents
Camille thanks her benefactor, introduces her family, and talks about what the loss of their father has meant. She also discusses her studies and approaching entrance exam for the highly reputable teacher's college, Ecole Normale.

Box 1, Folder 4
Extent: 1 page.
Contents
Camille describes her personal pride and concern that the Americans will be fighting closely with the French, as well as the general enthusiasm and positive feelings of the French for the "handsome and noble" American soldiers. She also describes her continuing studies for entrance into teacher's college.
Box 1, Folder 5  

Extent: 1 page.

Contents

Camille describes their family vacation in the country. She thanks Miss Veitch again for her financial support and talks about how it will aid in her educational efforts. While she has failed to gain acceptance to the Ecole Normale, she will continue her teaching studies.

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Box 1, Folder 6  
**Letter. Madame L. Genay and Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. March 1918.**

Extent: 2 pages.

Contents

Camille says that she has been tired lately and is having trouble staying alert through all of her classes. Her physics class was cancelled this week because the students had to take refuge in the basement from the local bombardments. All of the students and faculty, as well as the director, were huddled there for over two hours studying, resting, and singing patriotic songs. They could hear the planes flying above and the sound of nearby cannon fire. Camille discusses how her mother was also forced to take to the basement with her own students. Camille goes on to describe the recent trouble in the city of Paris and the surrounding suburbs caused by the German flotilla. She also recalls the recent Allied retreat and loss of territory to the German forces. Still, she has high hopes that the next offensive will regain the territory and position. Camille describes the many Americans now in Versailles; "handsome and full of energy", etc. She explains how her school principal encourages the students keep up with news of the Allies' efforts. There is a lengthy post script that discusses the newest shellings around Paris, the Channy region, and the Oise.

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Box 1, Folder 7  
**Letter. Mrs. Walter Brewster to Mildred Veitch. March 26, 1918.**

Language of Material: English.

Extent: 1 page.

Contents

Mrs. Brewster thanks Miss Veitch for her support of the Genay family and the Fatherless Children of France.

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Box 1, Folder 8  
**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. June 10, 1918.**

Extent: 1 1/2 pages.

Contents

Camille opens, discouraged by a formidable attack by "the Goths" against the American front. She feels that many people are coming to doubt the Allies' final victory and that unrest is rising in France. The Germans have made significant advance and are coming closer to the city of Paris (80km). Camille discusses the heroism of the soldiers and their courage amidst ongoing gas attacks. There is more talk of taking refuge in basements against the ongoing attacks. Her mother has taken Marie Louise to Bourgogne to stay with friends. She laments on the sleepless nights, the fatigue, and the concern of her mother.
Box 1, Folder 9

**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. August 3, 1918.**

**Extent:** 1 1/2 pages.

**Contents**

This letter is written from the Genay family's country home at Saint-Sauveur, a small village, where they are vacationing for three weeks. She talks about the horses, the cultivation of wheat in the area, taking long walks with her mother and sister, and the freshness of the countryside and moves on to detail the large German offensive of July 18, 1918 (massive artillery shaking the doors and windows, etc.). Camille says that they have heard also of a successful Allied advance near Soissons and that she intends to talk with local French soldiers once they return to their nearby fort. She describes the large numbers of Americans staying near them at Saint-Sauveur. Camille closes with news of her return to studies after their vacation.

Box 1, Folder 10

**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. September 13, 1918.**

**Extent:** 1 1/2 pages.

**Contents**

Camille again mentions the successful Allied offensive discussed in the previous letter and assures her "big sister" that she has returned safe from holiday. She gives praise to the families who have sacrificed so much in the terrible war. Her mother will return to classes tomorrow but she will have until October. In this portion, Camille makes a long comparison between French and US vacation regions and comments with respect to changes since the war.

Box 1, Folder 11

**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. October 18, 1918.**

**Extent:** 2 pages.

**Contents**

Camille has been resting and enjoying her school work this new year. In this letter, she takes time discussing the problem of infectious disease in wartime: the current epidemics, the precautions being taken, and the recent cholera epidemic among the German soldiers. She also discusses French happiness with the actions of the US President and his agreement with the patriotic ideals of France. Camille moves on to the return of Alsace-Lorraine and closes with hopes for a victorious year.

Box 1, Folder 12

**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. December 1918.**

**Extent:** 1 1/2 pages.

**Contents**

Camille is looking forward to meeting with Mildred Veitch's friend, Mr. Budge, who will be visiting this week. She has been spending a lot of time with him lately, as well as her English teacher, Madame Jobard; they have been talking about current events. She also includes the text of a recent article about a "repatriatee" of Maine-et-Loire. Camille goes on to elucidate recent situations involving the transfer of prisoners of war and the US President's visit later in the month. She has enclosed photos from the region of Bourgogne.
Box 1, Folder 13


Extent: 3 pages.

Contents

Madame Genay opens with best wishes for the new year and affection from her daughter Camille. She assures Veitch of Camille’s great enthusiasm for her letters, happiness at having a “big sister”, and growing love of the United States. She gives thanks also for their introduction to Mr. Budge, telling of their wonderful visit and time spent together. She speaks of the heroism of the brave soldiers and their families, also mentioning again the situations with the transfer of prisoners of war and the conditions of their captivity. Discussed again is the situation in Alsace. Genay assures Veitch that the French have not forgotten their generous allies and the work they have done. She brings up current situations with orphans and the concerns of the Fatherless Children of France. She closes with thanks for the help of Miss Veitch and hopes that they will all be able to gather soon in Paris.

Box 1, Folder 14


Extent: 1 1/2 pages.

Contents

Camille would like to take a trip with Mildred’s sister, who has also been writing to them. Camille commends her courage in leaving her parents and traveling across the ocean for her studies as well as her great energy. She brings up the ongoing peace talks and the US President’s work along with Paris’ slow recovery and how the industry there has been hurt greatly by the war.

Box 1, Folder 15


Extent: 1 1/2 pages.

Contents

Madame Genay expresses Camille’s affection and thanks. She also expresses affection for Veitch’s younger sister, to whom the women have also been writing. Madame Geneay speaks of her concern over Mildred’s sister’s large work load and upcoming exam, and assures her that it should not be very hard to pass. She tells how women had previously been barred from participation in these tests, but now there are women moving forward like never before. There are twenty or so young women at the Sorbonne for every two or three hundred men. Madame Genay expresses hopes to see Mildred’s sister as well as her friend Mr. Budge in Versailles later this month. She closes with affections and thanks.

Box 1, Folder 16


Extent: 2 1/2 pages.

Contents

Camille discusses their plans to remain in Versailles for vacation rather than going to Saint-Sauveur, as they usually do. In the month of September, they will visit their brave father’s tomb in Belgium. She speaks of the sadness that they will feel on this trip, also the inability to return his body closer to home. Camille says that her mother has finished classes for the year and will be resting rather than taking on work at a child care facility for extra money, as she usually does. She has been thinking about her upcoming graduation and preparations for her final school year. She is also excited about the prospect of her sister Marie Louise attending school with her next year; while she works hard, she is young and does not take school seriously enough. Camille also mentions their frequent contact with Veitch’s sister Edith, whom they all enjoy. She closes with details on the current demobilization efforts and efforts to renew French industry.
Box 1, Folder 17  
**Letter. Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch. December 27, 1919.**  
Extent: 3 pages.  
Contents  
Camille Genay tells of her vacation and impending graduation exams; she has spoken with her sister Marie Louise about the possibility of joining her in school. In France, life is starting to get back to normal, but the devastated land and remaining economic problems continue to thwart progress. Camille writes of some relaxation since the recent armistice, but continued spirit to renew the economy after the years of tension. "France is well, and she changes everyday..."  

Box 1, Folder 18  
Extent: 1 page.  
Contents  
This letter offers affection and best wishes to Mildred on the announcement of her wedding to Robert West. Camille Genay thanks Miss Veitch for her continued communication, friendship, and support.  

Box 1, Folder 37  
**Calling Card of Mme. (Widow) Eugene Genay. circa 1920.**  
Extent: With felicitations and greetings to Mr. and Mrs. Robert West.  

Box 1, file 19  
**Letter. "Scotty" to "Veitchy". June 8, 1930.**  
Language of Material: English.  
Extent: 4 pages.  
Contents  
This letter is from a friend of Mildred and details a visit with the Genay family.  

Box 1, Folder 20  
**Letter. Madame A. Seligmann-Lui to Mrs. R. K. West. June 12, 1930.**  
Language of Material: English.  
Extent: 1 page.  
Contents  
Madame Seligmann-Lui discusses the continuing efforts of the Fatherless Children of France.  

Box 1, Folder 21  
**Letter. Madame L. Genay to Mrs. Robert K. West [Mildred Veitch]. October 8, 1930.**  
Extent: 1 page.  
Contents  
Madame Genay laments their confusion over Mildred's failure to write for an extended time. She discusses Camille's recent graduation in Science and Philosophy and the course of study that she is currently working on at the Sorbonne in Paris. She speaks also of communicating with Mildred's sister Edith and her friend Mr. Budge.  

Box 1, Folder 22  
**Envelopes. 1918-1930.**  
Physical Description: 1 folder.  

Box 1, Folder 23-36  
**Series 2: Postcards and Greeting Cards. 1918-1930.**  
Physical Description: 14 folders.  
Scope and Contents note  
This series contains postcards and greeting cards exchanged between Veitch and the Genay family.  

Box 1, Folder 23  
General Physical Description note: With message from C[amille] Genay.
Box 1, Folder 24  Postcard of the main square of Massevaux, "in Reconquered Alsace". November 11, 1918.

    General Physical Description note: With messages from Mme. L. Genay and Camille Genay.

Box 1, Folder 25  ?Handmade Christmas card. December 10, 1918.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription from C[amille] Genay.

Box 1, Folder 26  Postcard of the Palace of Versailles--Galerie des Glaces. May 27, 1919.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription from C[amille] Genay.

Box 1, Folder 27  Bonne Annee Postcard. December 1921.

    General Physical Description note: Winter leaf motif. With message from Camille Genay to Mildred Veitch.


Box 1, Folder 29  Postcard of the Trianon Palace, Versailles, as English hospital. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription from Camille [Genay].

Box 1, Folder 30  Postcard of the Palace of Versailles--Salle du Jeu de Paume. n.d.

Box 1, Folder 31  Joyeux Noel card. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription from Camille Genay.

Box 1, Folder 32  Souhaits de Bonheur card. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: With New Year's wishes from Camille Genay.

Box 1, Folder 33  Postcard of the Jardin des Tuileries, Paris. postmark illegible.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription and signatures of Camille Genay, Mme L. Genay, Marie-Louise, Edith.

Box 1, Folder 34  Postcard of young girl with fish and flowers. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: Inscription: On dit que sa porte bonheur / Je le desire de tout mon coeur.

Box 1, Folder 35  Hereux Noel card. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: Embroidery on cloth.

Box 1, Folder 36  Bonne Annee Postcard. n.d.

    General Physical Description note: With inscription by C[amille] Genay.

Box 1, Folder 38-40  Series 3: Published Materials. 1917-1926.

    Physical Description: 3 folders.

    Scope and Contents note
    This series contains pamphlets, a newspaper clipping, and a calling card, relating to the Genay family and their work with the Fatherless Children of France.

Box 1, Folder 38  Article: To My Big Sister America," Chicago Herald. September 10, 1917.

    Language of Material: English.

    Extent: 1 newspaper clipping + preservation photocopy.

    Scope and Contents note
    This article discusses the Genay family women and their involvement with the organization, Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine].
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Institut de France, Award of the Prix Audiffred to the Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine]. March 17, 1923. |
| Box 1, Folder 40 | Fatherless Children of France [Fraternite Franco-Americaine], Proceedings of the 11th Annual General Meeting. April 22, 1926. |
| Box 1, Folder 41-49 | Series 4: Photographs. 1918-1930. |
| Box 1, Folder 41 | "Maman et son amie". circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 42 | "Vue du parc". Versailles. circa 1918. |
| Box 1, Folder 43 | "Dans le parc. Quelques Americains passent." Versailles. circa 1918. |
| Box 1, Folder 44 | Panorama of Paris viewed from St. Cloud. circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 45 | Lake at Moutier, in the Bourgogne. circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 46 | Photographs of the Genay family, together with others, on the shore of the lake at Moutier, in the Bourgogne. circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 47 | "Route sur laquelle nous allions souvent nous promener en vacances". circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 48 | "Paysage de Bourgogne". circa 1918-1920. |
| Box 1, Folder 49 | Wedding photograph. Versailles. circa 1930. |

Extent: 2 copies.  
Physical Description: 9 folders.  
Scope and Contents note  
Photograph of Madame Genay and her 2 daughters, together with a female friend and her son.  
Soldiers sitting in pyramid-shaped structures in the park at Versailles.  
Soldiers in the park at Versailles.  
Soldiers in the park at Versailles.  
Photographs of the Genay family, together with others, on the shore of the lake at Moutier, in the Bourgogne. circa 1918-1920.  
Probably from the marriage of Marie-Louise Genay and Jean Barbotte, Versailles, July 28, 1930.