Bartholomew and Michel Family Papers

Finding aid prepared by Katrina Denman.
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Bartholomew and Michel Family Papers
Dates: 1847-1913
Collection Number: mssHM 75393-75636
Creator: Bartholomew family
Michel family
Extent: 270 items
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: Correspondence between three generations of the Michel and Bartholomew families, ranging from 1847-1913. Both families were highly educated, literate, and interested in politics, which is apparent in many of their writings. Topics covered in the letters include courtships, family relations, life in California in the 1880s, female college students at Urbana and Bryn Mawr University, the 1884 presidential election, and Swedenborgian philosophy. Also includes some photographs and ephemera.
Language of Material: The records are in English.
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Preferred Citation
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Acquisition Information
Biographical Note
Mary Eletra Loveridge Michel (1828-1883) was born in Virginia, although her parents were natives of Massachusetts. Like many of her female descendants, Mary was an avid reader and follower of the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg. She had at least one brother, John Loveridge, who died of illness in Kentucky. Sometime after 1847 Mary married Dr. Robert B. Michel (1824-1896), who was born in Pennsylvania to a French father and American mother and served in the Confederate Army with the 2nd Mississippi State Cavalry. Robert’s sister Elizabeth Michel Blair (1825-c.1925) married John Blair (1819-1894) in 1844. Robert also had at least two brothers, William A. Michel (who traveled to California in 1853) and James G. Michel. Robert and Mary had at least four children: Ralph, Mary, Annie, and Elizabeth. Dr. Ralph S. Michel (1851-1933) married Genevieve “Jennie” Gebhard (1871-1948). Both are buried in Springboro Cemetery, Warren County, Ohio. Annie Michel was born in Ohio in 1863 and may have married a man named Miller. Elizabeth Michel McKeown (b.1867) attended Urbana University and married John McKeown.
Mary M. Michel Bartholomew (Oct.21, 1858-July 13, 1912) was Mary and Robert Michel’s oldest daughter. She married Dr. James N. Bartholomew in Springboro, Ohio, in September 1884 and moved with him to Los Alamos, California, where Dr. Bartholomew practiced medicine in a rural area. Mary spent much of her time homesick, and wrote often to her sisters and close friend Florence Bedford. By the mid-1880s the Bartholomews had moved to Ohio, where their oldest child, Mary Eleanor, was born in 1885. Their son Robert was born on December 30, 1890, and attended Purdue University.
The Bartholomews’ daughter Mary Eleanor Bartholomew, known as Eleanor, was born on December 30, 1885, in Trenton, Ohio. She attended Lakeview High School in Chicago and the Pratt Institute High School in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a bachelor’s degree in Latin and English in 1909. Following her graduation she taught English at the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr for two years. She appears to have married a man named Fogg. She died in Pasadena, California, in March 1970.
Scope and Content

The collection includes correspondence between three generations of the Michel and Bartholomew families, ranging from 1847-1913. Both families were highly educated, literate, and interested in politics, which is apparent in many of their writings. The earliest letters were written by Mary Eletra Loveridge to Robert B. Michel during their courtship in 1847. Mary specifically writes of her interest in Emanuel Swedenborg (“in [his writings] I think I have discovered many truths”), her religious disagreements with her mother, her loneliness and lack of female friends (“I should like to have one friend of my own sex, to whom I should not be afraid to say any thing”), of her love of books (including Alexandre Dumas and Charles Dickens), and of multiple local deaths from cholera. Also included is a letter from Mary’s mother L.R. Loveridge informing Mary of the death of her brother John.

Other courtship letters include those between Mary M. Michel and James Bartholomew in the early 1880s, which particularly highlight the 1884 presidential election. James writes of Ben Butler (1884 Presidential nominee for the Greenback-Labor Party), his political disagreements with his father (“he’s a Republican Democratic Independent”), his anxiousness to get married soon, and the need for him to travel to California as soon as possible. Later letters written to Mary after their marriage recount his 1893 travels through London, Paris, Vienna, and parts of Germany, as well as his return to the United States aboard the ship Alaska. Mary writes of her love of books (including Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot, and Charles Dickens), her thoughts on the election, and notes on a variety of friends and family members. In letters written from California to her sisters Annie and Elizabeth from 1884 to 1886, Mary writes of her first impression of California (“Ohio is a beautiful place, [but] surely California is the garden spot of the earth,” she enthused, although she later referred to Los Alamos as a “godless little place”), reminiscences of their childhood, her guilt at leaving her sister Annie at home following the death of their mother in 1883 (“it seems to have been cruel and selfish and hard-hearted and everything else for me to have gone off!”), of problems with their father (“Does Father ever mention me? And I wonder if his conscience hurts him, but I dare say not”), her first experience with an earthquake on April 19, 1885 (“It was something like a huge wave, I can’t describe it...a horrible sensation”), the hardships of being a doctor’s wife, her dining companions (including a “young Spanish fellow, handsome as a picture” and “one very good looking gentleman from New Orleans”), and candid descriptions of neighbors and acquaintances (at one dinner party she encountered a man from San Francisco “who is on trial for buying...Spanish votes for $2 a piece...[his] wife is another man’s mistress over in Lompee”). Later letters to her daughter Mary Eleanor Bartholomew focus on family and community activities and the experiences of her son Robert.

The collection also includes a long series of letters written from Mary Eleanor Bartholomew to her brother Robert, both while she was at school in Brooklyn and when she was attending Bryn Mawr. In addition to notes on family and school acquaintances, Eleanor’s letters cover a wide variety of topics, including descriptions of Brooklyn, her busy college schedule, her trips to the Bronx Zoo, a “lady lion tamer,” Japanese jujitsu, and a French Twelfth Night Party she attended. Other notable items in the collection include a letter from William A. Michel to his brother Robert written in 1853 when William was traveling through Council Bluffs and Jefferson City aboard the “Polar Star” steamship on his way to California; an 1884 letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew from a friend who notes “a trip to California doesn’t mean as much in these days of steam and electricity;” a letter from Ralph Michel to his sister Mary in which he writes that “I don’t often see father -- in fact I don’t want to see him very often until after the [1884] election ... His democracy is of that kind that is called aggressive;” a few photographs of Mary Michel Bartholomew, Mary Eleanor Bartholomew, and an unidentified Michel man; a cookbook kept by Robert Michel’s sister Elizabeth Michel Blair apparently in the 1830s and 1840s; and some Confederate printed money collected by Robert Michel in Mississippi.

Arrangement

Correspondence is arranged chronologically in four boxes.

Personal Names

Butler, Benjamin F. (Benjamin Franklin), 1818-1893.

Corporate Names

Bryn Mawr College.

Urbana University (Urbana, Ohio).

Subjects

College students--19th century--Correspondence
College students--20th century--Correspondence.
Cooking--United States--History--19th century.
Courtship.
Domestic relations--California.
Domestic relations--Ohio.
Box 1

**Correspondence. 1847-1878.** HM 75393-75450.

1847 December 27. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75394
1848 April 17. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. Cincinnati, Ohio. HM 75395
1848 November 12. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75396
1848 December 4. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75398
1849 January 29. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75401
1849 September 22. Julius S. Taylor. Letter of introduction for Dr. Robert B. Michel. HM 75402
1849 December 27. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75408
1850 February 1. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75409
1850 March 15. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75410
1851 February 16. A. Sherman and Sarah R. Loveridge. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75415
1853 June 1. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75416
1854 May 9. Robert B. Michel. Letter to Mary Loveridge Michel. HM 75422
1854 May 12. Robert B. Michel. Letter to Mary Loveridge Michel. HM 75423
1866 April 17. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75431
1866 April 25. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75432
1866 May 2. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75433
1866 May 24. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75435
1866 June 7. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75436
1866 October 4. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75437
1866 November 8. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75438
1867 May 19. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75439
1867 June 7. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75440
1867 October 23. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75441
1867 November 10. Annie Michel. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75443
1867 December 1. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75445
1868 March 20. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75446
1878 April 27. Ralph S. Michel. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75450

1880 September 19. Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Letter to Annie Michel. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75451
1881 May 1. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75452
1883 October 27. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to James N. Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75458
1884 July 20. James N. Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. LaFayette, Ind. HM 75476

Box 3
Correspondence. 1884, Sep.-1886. HM 75492-75541.

1884 September 20. Helen? Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75499
1884 September 20. Wedding announcement for Dr. James N. Bartholomew and Mary M. Michel. HM 75501
1884 September 23. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75504
1884 October 1. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. San Francisco, Calif. HM 75506
1884 October 2. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75507
1884 October 4. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75508
1884 October 6. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to “my dear home folks.” Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75509
1884 October 12. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75511
1884 October 15. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75513
1884 October 21. Rowena E. Wright. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75514
1884 October 23. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75515
1884 October 27. Ralph S. Michel. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75518
1884 October 29. Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Letter to James N. Bartholomew. Urbana, Ohio. HM 75519
1884 October 30. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75520
1884 November 1. Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Urbana, Ohio. HM 75521
1884 November 7. Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75526
1884 December 9. Mary M. Ballard. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. Red Lion, Ohio. HM 75531
1884. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75532
1884. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel et al. Sacramento, Calif. HM 75533
1885 April 5. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75534
1885 April 19. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75535
1885 May 27. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Florence Bedford. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75536
1885 June 10. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75537
1885 August 1. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Santa Barbara, Calif. HM 75538
1886 September 26. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75540
1887 Florence Bedford. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75541

Box 4

Correspondence. 1890-1910. HM 75542-75584.

1890 February 17. Bartholomew, Mary Michel. Letter to Annie Michel. HM 75542
1895 October 30. Robert B. Michel. Letter to dear children. HM 75546
1906 October 22. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Chicago, Ill. HM 75555
1906 December 5. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Chicago, Ill. HM 75556
1907 February 23. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Chicago, Ill. HM 75558
1907 March 18. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Chicago, Ill. HM 75560
1907 April 6. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75561
1907 May 31. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75563
1907 May. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75564
1910 February Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Clarks Hill, Ind. HM 75579

Box 5 Correspondence, miscellaneous, and ephemera. 1911-1913 and undated. HM 75585-75636.
1911 May. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Hamilton, Ohio. HM 75586
1911 June 3. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Denver, Colo. HM 75587
1912 March 7. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Denver, Colo. HM 75593
1913 August 21. Agreement for a tombstone for Mary Michel Bartholomew. Springboro, Ohio. HM 75594
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75595
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75596
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75597
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75598
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75599
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75600
Undated. Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. Letter to Robert M. Bartholomew. HM 75601
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75604
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75605
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75606
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75607
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75608
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75609
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75610
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75611
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Santa Barbara, Calif. HM 75612
Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. Los Alamos, Calif. HM 75613
 Undated. Mary Michel Bartholomew. Letter to Annie Michel. HM 75614
 Undated. Elizabeth Michel McKeown. Letter to Annie Michel. Urbana, Ohio. HM 75616
 Undated. Annie Michel. Letter to Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75617
 Undated. Annie Michel. Letter to Ralph S. Michel. HM 75618
 Undated. Mary Loveridge Michel. Letter to Robert B. Michel. HM 75620
 Undated. L.R. Loveridge. Letter to Mary Loveridge Michel. Covington, Ky. HM 75623
 Approximately 1830s-1840s. Elizabeth Michel Blair. Cookbook. HM 75627
 Undated. Consolation: [poem]. HM 75628
 Undated. The Evening Hour: [poem]. HM 75629
 Undated. Untitled poem. HM 75630
 Approximately 1898. Photograph of Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75631
 Undated. Photograph of Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75632
 Undated. Photograph of Mary Michel Bartholomew and Mary Eleanor Bartholomew. HM 75633
 Undated. Tintype of Mary Michel Bartholomew. HM 75634
 Undated. Photograph of Michel man. HM 75635
 Undated. Photograph of “little Leland.” HM 75636
 Ephemera.
 Physical Description: 7 items.

Notes.
 Physical Description: 8 items.

Envelopes.
 Physical Description: 11 items.