Clark Family Correspondence: Finding Aid

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Clark Family Correspondence

Dates (inclusive): 1852-1895

Collection Number: mssHM 61076-61139

Creator: Clark family.

Extent: 65 pieces in 2 boxes

Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department

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Abstract: This collection contains correspondence of Sarah Clark (active 1852-1895) and the Clark family of Rising Sun, Indiana; California; and Austin, Nevada. The letters cover a wide range of subjects including the citrus industry in California and Nevada; economic conditions in California, Indiana, and Nevada; agriculture in Northern California; hunting; sickness; courtship; children; and business.

Language: English.

Access

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item]. Clark Family Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance


Cataloger’s Note

C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark’s middle name is spelled “Fransis” in one letter by his mother. For standardization purposes, the traditional spelling of Francis has been used in cataloging this collection. Throughout the collection, he is referred to in several ways: Charles Francis, Charles Frank, Frank, C. F., and once or twice as “Charley” by his mother.

Biographical Note

Sarah Clark (active 1852-1895), the most prominent figure in this group of letters, lived in Rising Sun, Indiana with her husband Robert V. Clark. In early 1852, he moved to either Coloma or El Dorado, California. Her correspondence to him from Rising Sun ended in 1854, and although she may have met up with him in California, they eventually moved west to Austin, Nevada. They later returned to California and moved to El Dorado, (1872?), Oakland (1883?) and then possibly back to El Dorado (1889?).

They had six children: Anna Matilda Clark, C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, Eliza Jane Clark (b. 1842), Joshua Clark, Robert V. Clark, Jr., and William G. Clark (fl. 1853-1869). Sarah Clark mentions “Nat” or “Vat” briefly in early letters while Robert V. Clark was in California without her, but it is unclear whether or not he was in fact their son.

One of their sons, William G. Clark, married a woman named Hattie. They had a son, William G., Jr., and lived in El Dorado, California. Another son, Joshua Clark, moved to Austin, Nevada and then to El Dorado. While in Austin, he thought about opening up a saloon. He worked at a slaughterhouse in Simpsons Park, Nevada, six miles from Austin.

Little is known about Robert V. Clark, Jr. who was referred to as “Rob” once or twice in letters by his mother. He lived in Austin, Nevada in the late 1860s, but by 1890, he was living in El Dorado, California. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark was born on February 14, 1852 a few weeks after his father had left for California. Later in his life, he lived in El Dorado, Oakland, and at one point, Sacramento, California and may have sold fruit. He ran an establishment with his friend George who got married on April 9, 1883.

Sarah Clark had three sisters: Amelia Buck, from Fort Madison, Iowa; Mary Best from Rising Sun who had two sons, Joshua B. (Joshua Beeson) and Nathaniel C. Crouch; and E. C. (Elizabeth) Burns, also from Rising Sun who had at least one child,
Hollie.

Scope and Content
This collection contains 21 letters from Sarah Clark to her husband and children. The remaining correspondence is between Clark family members. There are a few additional pieces written by friends, relatives, and one business associate. The correspondence covers a wide range of subjects including: the citrus industry in California and Nevada; economic conditions in California, Indiana, and Nevada; agriculture in Northern California; hunting; sickness; courtship; children; and business. There are also two letters containing love poetry, and the collection contains an express receipt from Wells Fargo and Company.

Sarah Clark (fl. 1852-1895) is the most prolific figure in this collection, as she wrote twenty-one letters and was the addressee of eight. There are, however, eighteen other authors of these letters, including her sons, Charles 3 Scope and content note (continued) Francis Clark (7 letters), Joshua Clark (6 letters), William G. Clark (3 letters), and Robert V. Clark, Jr. (3 letters). There are 5 letters from her husband, Robert V. Clark, a combined six from Sarah’s three sisters, and an assortment of letters from friends, acquaintances, and one business associate.

The letters describe day-to-day activities of the family members as well as their hopes, dreams, and longings. Sarah Clark, left to care for six children while her husband tried to establish a new life in California, attempted to survive with little money and with the hope that she would once again be reunited with her husband. Her early letters relate a longing for his companionship and her need to support and take care of him. Her later letters focus primarily on her ill health and occasional discomfort.

The letters in the collection also make reference to diseases such as smallpox, home remedies such as a bread and milk poultice for aches and pains, and the death of a child in town where no one attended her funeral. There are upbeat moments as family members participate in various functions such as picnics, parties, and one outdoor event where Joshua Clark recalls that women participated in a football game. Joshua Clark also received two letters containing love poetry from a woman named Reta. There is ample discussion of the citrus industry with at least two family members, C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark and William G. Clark, involved in the distribution and sale of an assortment of fruit. There are passing references to the opera coming to town, singer Jenny Lind (spelled “Lynn” in the letter), and winter sports such as sledding. There is occasional talk of road surveying and road taxes and one family member runs into several “Chinamen” while surveying his property. Some of the correspondence discusses courtship and marriage. In one letter, a woman named Emma requests a photograph of a prospective suitor with very little requirements as to appearance, height, or weight. Her only stipulation is that he be able to support her and be an Israelite.

Arrangement
Correspondence arranged chronologically in two boxes, followed by an 1870 Wells Fargo and Company Express note and 1886 envelope at the end of Box 2.

Indexing: Subject
Agriculture - California, Northern
Big Bear (Calif.)
• 1883, Apr. 13. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61125.
Business enterprises - California, Northern
• 1869, May 23. William G. Clark, active 1853-1869, letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61107.
California - Economic conditions - 19th century
• 1883, Oct. 25. Robert V. Clark letter to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61127.
• 1887, Oct. 22. Robert V. Clark letter to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61129.
• 1888, July 20. Sarah letter to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61131.
• 1889, Dec. 29. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61136.

Children
• 1852, Feb. 20. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61076.
• 1853, June 19. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61079.
• 1854, June 11. Mary Best letter to Joshua B. (Joshua Beeson) Crouch and Nathaniel Crouch. HM 61085.

Chinese - California, Northern
• 1878, May 2. Joshua Clark letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852. HM 61121.

Churches
• 1870, Apr. 19. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852. HM 61115.

Citrus industry and trade - California, Northern
• 1869, May 23. William G. Clark, active 1853-1869, letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61107.
• 1869, Sept. 6. A. Sower letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61110.
• 1869, Sept. 16. A. Sower letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61111.

Citrus industry and trade - Nevada
• 1868, Nov. 18. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61098.
• 1868, Dec. 3. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61099.
• 1869, Apr. 29. Letter to Hattie Clark. HM 61105.

Clothing and Dress
• 1852, July 4. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61077.
• 1854, July 2. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61087.
• 1854, July 30. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61088.
• 1854, Sept. 17. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61090.
• 1854, Oct. 15. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61091.

Coloma Vineyard House (Calif.)

Courtship
• 1868, Nov. 5. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, letter to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61097.
• 1868, Nov. 18. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852, letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61098.
• [1871], Nov. 9. Emma letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61116.
• 1873, Sept. 25. Mattie Longham letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852. HM 61118.
• 1881, Feb. 19. Reta letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61123.
• 1881, Feb. 25. Reta letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61124.

Fairs - Nevada
• 1868, Nov. 5. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852 letter to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61097.

Football
• 1878, May 2. Joshua Clark letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b. 1852. HM 61121.

Funerals
• 1868, Dec. 27. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to William G. Clark, fl. 1853-1869. HM 61100.

Gambling - Nevada

Household goods
• 1868, Dec. 27. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to William G. Clark, fl. 1853-1869. HM 61100.

Hunting - Nevada

Indiana - Economic conditions - 19th century
• 1854, Jan. 15. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61080.
• 1854, Sept. 17. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61090.
• Post-[1854], Mar. 27-28. Elizabeth Burns letter to Sarah Clark, fl. 1852-1895. HM 61092.

Judaism
• [1871], Nov. 9. Emma letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61116.

Lakes - California
• 1883, Apr. 13. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852 letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61125.

Lind, Jenny, 1820-1887
• 1852, July 4. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61077.

Love letters
• 1881, Feb. 19. Reta letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61123.
• 1881, Feb. 25. Reta letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61124.

Marriage, customs and rights
• 1852, Feb. 20. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61076.
• [1871], Nov. 9. Emma letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61116.

Moving, household

Music - 19th century
• 1852, July 4. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61077.

Nevada - Economic conditions - 19th century
• 1868, Dec. 3. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852, letter to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61099.
• 1870, Apr. 19. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61115.

Picnicking
• 1878, May 2. Joshua Clark letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61121.

Railroad stations - California, Northern

Roads, surveying
• 1878, May 2. Joshua Clark letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61121.

Round Meadows (Calif.)
• 1883, Apr. 13. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852, letter to Joshua Clark. HM 61125.

Saloons - Nevada

Shingle Spring Station (El Dorado, Calif.)

Sick family
• 1853, June 19. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61079.
• 1854, July 30. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61088.
• 1854, Aug. 13. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61089.
• 1870, Apr. 19. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61115.
• 1878, May 2. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895, letter to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61121.
Slaughtering and slaughterhouses - Nevada

Taxes
  • 1854, May 15. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 letter to Robert V. Clark. HM 61080.

Winchester rifles

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects
Clark family.
Citrus fruit industry -- California.
Citrus fruit industry -- Nevada.
Courtship -- United States -- History -- Sources.
Hunting -- Nevada.
Austin (Nev.) -- History -- Sources.
California, Northern -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Indiana -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Nevada -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.

Forms/Genres
Family papers -- United States -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 19th century.
Love letters -- United States -- 19th century.

Additional Contributors
Clark, Charles Francis, b. 1852.
Clark, Joshua.
Clark, Robert.
Clark, Sarah, active 1852-1895.
Clark, William G.

Box 1

1852-1869

1852, Feb. 2 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61076

1852, July 4 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61077

1853, Feb. 23 Rising Sun, Ind. William G. Clark, active 1853-1869 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61078

1853, June 19 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61079

1854, Jan. 15 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61080

1854, Feb. 15 Rising Sun, Ind. William G. Clark, active 1853-1869 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61081

1854, Feb. 24 Fort Madison, Ia. Amelia Buck to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895.
HM 61082

1854, Apr. 30 [Rising Sun, Ind.] Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61083

1854, May 17-21 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.
HM 61084
1852-1869

1854, June 11 Rising Sun, Ind. Mary Best to Joshua B. (Joshua Beeson) Crouch and Nathaniel C. Crouch. HM 61085
1854, June 18-19 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61086
1854, July 2 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61087
1854, July 30 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61088
1854, Aug. 13 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61089
1854, Sept. 17 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61090
1854, Oct. 15 Rising Sun, Ind. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark. HM 61091
post-[1854], Mar. 27-28 Rising Sun, Ind. Elizabeth Burns to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61092
1856, Apr. 13 Rising Sun, Ind. Mary Best to Eliza Jane Clark. HM 61093
1856, June 12 Rising Sun, Ind. Hollie Burns to Eliza. HM 61094
1858, June 14-15 Rising Sun, Ind. Elizabeth Burns to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61095
1862, Oct. 12 Rising Sun, Ind. Elizabeth Burns to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61096
1868, Nov. 5 Austin, Nev. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852 to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895. HM 61097
1868, Nov. 18 Austin, Nev. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852 to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61098
1868, Dec. 3 Austin, Nev. C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852 to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61099
1868, Dec. 27 Austin, Nev. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61100
1869, Feb. 16 Austin, Nev. Joshua Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61101
1869, Mar. 20 Austin, Nev. Robert V. Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61102
1869, Apr. 8 Austin, Nev. Robert V. Clark to Hattie Clark. HM 61103
1869, Apr. 16 Austin, Nev. Joshua Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61104
1869, Apr. 29 Austin, Nev. to Hattie Clark. HM 61105
1869, May 17 Austin, Nev. to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61106
1869, May 23 El Dorado, Calif. William G. Clark, active 1853-1869 to Joshua Clark. HM 61107
[1869?], June 28 San Francisco, Calif. Joshua Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61108
1869, Sept. 3 Austin, Nev. Robert V. Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61109
1869, Sept. 6 Austin, Nev. A. Sower to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869, HM 61110
1869, Sept. 16 Austin, Nev. A. Sower to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61111

Box 2

1870-1895

post-[1869], Sept. 18 Austin, Nev. Robert V. Clark to William G. Clark, active 1853-1869. HM 61112
1870, Feb. 24 Austin, Nev. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Children. HM 61113
1870, Apr. 11 Austin, Nev. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61114
1870, Apr. 19 Austin, Nev. Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852. HM 61115
[1871], Nov. 9 San Francisco, Calif. Emma to Joshua Clark. HM 61116

Clark Family Correspondence: mssHM 61076-61139
Finding Aid
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Correspondents</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<td>1872</td>
<td>El Dorado, Calif.</td>
<td>Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Robert V. Clark.</td>
<td>HM 61117</td>
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<td>1873</td>
<td>Sacramento, Calif.</td>
<td>Mattie Longham to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852.</td>
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<td>Simpsons Park, Nev.</td>
<td>Joshua Clark to Robert V. Clark.</td>
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<td>Reta to Joshua Clark.</td>
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<td>Robert V. Clark to Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895.</td>
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<td>1883</td>
<td>Bouldin Island, Calif.</td>
<td>William G. Clark to Robert V. Clark.</td>
<td>HM 61128</td>
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<td>Sarah Clark to Joshua Clark.</td>
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<td>Arthur Denver King to Sarah J. King.</td>
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<td>Robert V. Clark to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852.</td>
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<td>Joshua Clark to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852.</td>
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<td>1889</td>
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<td>Sarah Clark to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852.</td>
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<td>1890</td>
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<td>Robert V. Clark to C. F. (Charles Francis) Clark, b.1852.</td>
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<td>1895</td>
<td>Coloma, Calif.</td>
<td>Sarah Clark, active 1852-1895 to Son.</td>
<td>HM 61138</td>
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<td>1870</td>
<td>Joshua Clark.</td>
<td>Wells Fargo and Company Express note.</td>
<td>HM 61139</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>Envelope – Addressed to: Joshua, G. F., and R. V. Clark.</td>
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