Clemens Family Papers: Finding Aid


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Overview of the Collection
Title: Clemens Family Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1872-1908
Collection Number: mssHM 53346-53483
Creator: Clemens family
Extent: 139 items in 4 boxes and 1 tan rope case
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: This collection contains papers of the family of American author Samuel Langhorne Clemens (also known as Mark Twain), including 7 diaries of Jane Clampton Clemens (1880-1909), which detail her struggle with epilepsy, as well as medical treatments, ca. 1900, and correspondence and records of the family, including letters from all three Clemens daughters to their parents.
Language: English.
Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Clemens Family Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Purchased from the Phyllis Harrington estate on March 24, 1987 (accession number 1335).
Biographical Note
On February 2, 1870, Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835-1910) married Olivia Langdon (1845-1904), the daughter of Jervis Langdon, a wealthy coal mine magnate. In the first year of their marriage, Olivia gave birth to their son, Langdon Clemens. The baby was premature, and died in 1872. Clemens and Olivia had three more children: Olivia Susan (1872-1896), Clara (1874-1962), and Jane Lampton (1880-1909). The girls spent most of their childhood years at the Clemens home in Hartford, Connecticut, although they often traveled to Europe with their parents. Summers were spent at Quarry Farm, in Elmira, New York, with Olivia Clemens' sister, Susan Langdon Crane (1836-1924), and her husband Theodore Crane, who managed the Langdon coal company with Olivia's brother, Charles Jervis Langdon (1849-1916). The Clemens family also had a close relationship with Olivia's brother, his wife Ida Clark, and their children Jervis, Julia (1871-1948), and Ida (1881-1964).
As children, the Clemens girls enjoyed music and play-acting, and Clara studied piano and singing as an adult, and eventually appeared on the legitimate stage. In 1909, Clara married Russian pianist Ossip Gabrilowitsch (1878-1936) and continued concert work. In 1944, she married Jacques Samossoud, a Russian friend of Gabrilowitsch. Olivia Susan (Susy) Clemens attended Bryn Mawr College for several years, but depression and ill-health inhibited her progress, and she left without receiving a degree. Susy died of spinal meningitis at the age of twenty-four, much to the dismay of her father, who had considered her the prodigy of the family. Jane Lampton (Jean) Clemens also died young, at the age of twenty-nine. She was diagnosed as epileptic in 1896, and traveled with her family to European spas for treatment. For a number of years she was confined to a sanatorium in Katonah, New York. On Christmas Eve of 1909, she drowned in the bathtub during an epileptic seizure.
- Clemens, Clara (second daughter)
- Clemens, Jane (Jean) Lampton (third daughter)
- Clemens, Susy (first daughter)
- Crane, Susan (Langdon) (Samuel's sister-in-law; Olivia's sister)
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- Crane, Theodore (Susan Crane's husband; brother-in-law to Samuel and Olivia)
- Langdon, Charles Jervis (Samuel's brother-in-law; Olivia's brother)
- Langdon, Ida Clark (Charles Langdon's wife; sister-in-law to Samuel and Olivia)
- Langdon, Olivia Lewis (Samuel's mother-in-law; Olivia's mother)
- Loomis, Julia Langdon (daughter of Charles and Ida; niece to Samuel and Olivia)


**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains papers of the family of American writer Samuel Langhorne Clemens including 7 diaries of his daughter Jane Clampton Clemens and correspondence and records of the family, including letters from all three Clemens daughters to their parents. The following individuals are represented in the collection: Clara Clemens, Jane Lampton Clemens (1880-1909), Susy Clemens (1872-1896), Mary Mason Fairbanks, Grace Elizabeth King (1852-1932), and Elizabeth Gillette Warner (1838-1915). Note: the collection does not contain letters by Samuel Clemens; he is only represented as an addressee.

The collection includes 7 diaries of Jane Lampton Clemens, spanning the years 1900-1907. HM 53346 also contains 12 photographs that were inserted in the diary's opening for 1900, Nov. 11-12. The photos are not annotated in any way but several appear to have been taken in Europe, possibly Italy. The diaries, for the most part, cover the last years of her life, while she lived in Dublin, New Hampshire and a sanitarium in Katonah, New York. The diaries detail Jean Clemens struggle with epilepsy, as well as the medical treatments for the disease, circa the turn of the century.

There are also letters and records including letters from all three Clemens daughters to their father, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, and to their mother, Olivia Langdon Clemens. There are letters from various extended family members and friends to Olivia Langdon Clemens, as well as, financial records from various companies.

**Arrangement**

Arranged in the following manner:

1. Diaries of Jane Lampton Clemens (Box 1). The diaries are filed chronologically.
2. Correspondence and financial records (Boxes 2-4 and tan rope case). Filed alphabetically by author or company, with oversize items at the end.

**Indexing Terms**

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

**Subjects**

Clemens, Clara.
Clemens, Jane Lampton, 1880-1909.
Clemens, Olivia Langdon, 1845-1904.
Clemens, Susy, 1872-1896.
Fairbanks, Mary Mason.
King, Grace Elizabeth, 1851 or 1852-1932.
Twain, Mark, 1835-1910 -- Family -- Archives.
Warner, Elisabeth Gillette, 1838-1915.
Epilepsy.
Mental illness -- Treatment -- United States.
Sanatoriums -- United States.

**Forms/Genres**

Diaries -- United States.
Financial records -- United States.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States.
Photographs -- United States.

**Alternate Authors**

Clemens, Clara.
Clemens, Jane Lampton, 1880-1909.
Clemens, Olivia Langdon, 1845-1904.
Epilepsy. In Clemens, Jane Lampton, 1880-1909, Diaries (HM 53346-53352) and her letters to Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910, (HM 53356-53366).

Mental Illness—Treatment—United States. In Clemens, Jane Lampton, 1880-1909, Diaries (HM 53346-53352) and her letters to Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910, (HM 53356-53366).

Sanatoriums—United States. In Clemens, Jane Lampton, 1880-1909, Diaries (HM 53346-53352) and her letters to Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910, (HM 53356-53366).


Clemens, Susy, 1872-1896. 3 letters to Samuel Langhorne Clemens, 1835-1910, Hartford, Conn., Cote Ellerslie, Florence, Italy. (1884 -c.1893) HM 53369-53371.
Clemens, Susy, 1872-1896, and Clara Clemens. 1 letter to Susan Langdon Crane, L. (1 p.). (c. 1880) HM 53372.
Written in an unidentified hand.

Box 3
Crane-King (HM 53373-53407, 53409-53410)
Crane, Susan Langdon. 20 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, New York, N.Y., Elmira, N.Y., Geneva, Switzerland. (1881 -pre-1904) HM 53373-53392.
Crane, Susan Langdon. 7 letters to Samuel Langhorne Clemens, 1835-1910, Buffalo, N.Y., Elmira, N.Y., New York, N.Y. (1871-1902) HM 53393-53399.
Crane, Susan Langdon. 1 letter to Clara Clemens, A.L.S. (12 p.); Quarry Farm, Elmira, N.Y. (1898, Dec. 15) HM 53400.
Crane, Theodore. 3 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, Elmira, New York. (1882 -pre-1905) HM 53401-53403.
HM 53401 has a note in pencil written in an unidentified hand.

del Sabbione, Contessa Provana. 1 calling card to Jane Lampton Clemens, 1880-1909, A.N. on a calling card with envelope, Florence, Italy. (1904, approximately June) HM 53404.
Dunham, Mary. 1 letter to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, A.L.S. (8 p.);
Hartford, Conn. (1874, Feb. 9) HM 53405.
Fairbanks, Mary Mason. 1 letter to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, A.L.S. (4 p.); Cleveland, Ohio. (1872, Apr. 1) HM 53406.
With signature of C.S. Gillette.

With note on envelope.

Box 4
Langdon-Wulkow and unidentified (HM 53411-53430, 53432-53443, 53435-53483)
Langdon, Charles Jervis. 3 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, Elmira, N.Y. (1883-1887) HM 53411-53413.
Also: account of "Notes given to Mrs. S.L. Clemens [Olivia Langdon Clemens], also includes: note in pencil on verso of a J. Langdon & Co. office form (HM 53413).

Langdon, Charles Jervis. 5 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, Elmira, N.Y.. (1888) HM 53414-53418.
Also: Financial accounting for Olivia Langdon Clemens from March 1, 1888 to May 1, 1888. (1 p., typewritten), (HM53415).

Langdon, Charles Jervis. 2 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, Elmira, N.Y. (1890) HM 53419-53420.
Also: Financial account for Olivia Langdon Clemens, Apr. 2, 1890, written in a different hand (HM 53419). Also: Financial Accounting for Olivia Langdon Clemens, for the period from 1888, Oct. 1 to 1890, Apr. 2 HM 53420).

Langdon, Charles Jervis. 2 letters to Susan Langdon Crane, Elmira, N.Y. (1882) HM 53425-53426.

Langdon, Charles Jervis. 1 letter to Theodore Crane, contem. copy (2 p.); (incomplete), Elmira, N.Y. (1882, Apr. 29) HM 53427.
Written in an unknown hand.


Smith, Cornelia Ward. 1 letter to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, A.L.S. (6 p.); Heidelberg. (1880, Nov. 2) HM 53467.

Starr, M. Allen. 4 letters to Susan Langdon Crane, New York. (1896) HM 53468-53471.


Warner, Elizabeth Gillette, 1838-1915. 3 letters to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1910, Hartford, Conn. (1873-1888) HM 53474-53476.
Also: a note on the envelope in an unidentified hand (HM 53474).


Women's Aid Society. 1 postcard to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, N. on a postcard, Hartford, Conn. (1887, July 18) HM 53479.
This is a receipt for payment of annual subscription to the Women's Aid Society. Printed form filled in.

Wulkow & Cornelissen. 1 letter to Olivia Langdon Clemens, 1845-1904, A.L.S. (1 p.); Hamburg. (1893, Sept. 4) HM 53480.
The letter is written in German and appears to concern the delivery of tooth powder ordered by Olivia Langdon Clemens.

-----, 1 letter to Mable, L. (2 p.). (between 1872 and 1909) HM 53482.
The letter is written in Russian and appears to be a letter of introduction and recommendation for Ossip Gabrilowitsch as a pianist. The envelope is written in French and appears to be written in a different hand.

Oversize folders

Tan rope case Correspondence and Financial Records (HM 53434, 53431, 53421, 53408)

Also: Financial accounting for Olivia Langdon Clemens covering March 19 - April 31, 1890, (1 p.).