Melcena Burns Denny Plays: Finding Aid

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Overview of the Collection
Title: Melcena Burns Denny Plays
Dates (inclusive): 1946-1966
Bulk dates: 1946-1949
Collection Number: mssHM 65643-65679
Creator: Denny, Melcena Burns.
Extent: 37 pieces in 2 boxes.
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Abstract: This small group consists mainly of materials dealing with the production of two plays by California writer Melcena Burns Denny (1876–1974): "Black Bart, The Lone Robber of Calaveras" and "Lola Montez, The Spider Dancer"
Language: English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
Provenance
Gift of Estate of Mrs. Melcena Burns Denny, August 29, 1974.
Related Material
The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, has a copy of each of the plays represented in this collection as well (BANC MSS C-H 21).
Biographical Note
Melcena Burns Denny (1876–1974) was a member of the San Diego Writers' Club, the Authors' League of America, and the Dramatists' Guild. She was a native of California and a graduate of San Jose State Teachers College. In addition to her short stories and poems purchased by Collier’s, Woman’s Home Companion, and Youth’s Companion magazines, Denny was the author of two plays, "Black Bart, The Lone Robber of Calaveras" and "Lola Montez, The Spider Dancer."
Scope and Content
This small group consists mainly of materials dealing with the production of two plays by Melcena Burns Denny (1876–1974). There are multiple copies of each of these plays, but each has slight variations. "Black Bart, The Lone Robber of Calaveras," was performed at California's First Theatre by the Troupers of the Gold Coast in 1946 and 1952, then at the Balboa Park Puppet Theatre in San Diego by the Junior Theatre Summer Work Shop in 1950, and finally in 1961 by the Triangle Club at the three-day Apple Festival in Julian, California. Included are scripts of her play and an essay written by Denny about Black Bart (born 1829). Her other play, "Lola Montez, The Spider Dancer," was performed at California's First Theatre in 1948 and 1949 by the Troupers of the Gold Coast; and included are scripts of the play, an incomplete short story about Lola Montez (1818-1861), song lyrics, and the music written by Edward C. Hopkins.
Arrangement
This small group is organized as follows:
1. Manuscript material – arranged by genre as follows; letters (correspondence), scripts of plays, essay, short story, and notes (Box 1)
2. Lyrics, music, and other materials – arranged by genre as follows; lyrics, music, ephemera, clippings, and posters (Box 2)
Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library’s Online Catalog.

**Subjects**
Black Bart, 1829-
Denny, Melcena Burns.
Montez, Lola, 1818-1861.
Melodrama.
Popular culture -- California.
Women authors, American -- 20th century -- Archives.

**Forms/Genres**
Scripts (documents) -- California -- 20th century.

**Indexing: Subjects**

**Black Bart, born 1829**

- n.d. Melcena Burns Denny, notes on Black Bart, b. 1829. HM 65653.

**Montez, Lola, 1818-1861**


**Melodrama**


**Popular culture – California**


**Box 1**

**Manuscript material**

[Denny, Melcena Burns]. To Dene Denny and Hazel Watrous San Gabriel, Calif. 1949, June 8 HM 65643

Denny, Melcena Burns. To Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins San Gabriel, Calif. 1949, Nov. 23 HM 65644

Denny, Melcena Burns. To Helen de Fremery Pasadena, Calif. 1966, July 16 HM 65645


Denny, Melcena Burns. Play: “Black Bart, The Lone Robber of Calaveras” [San Diego, Calif.]. Undated HM 65647

Denny, Melcena Burns. Play: “Black Bart, the Lone Robber” [San Diego, Calif.]. Undated HM 65648

Denny, Melcena Burns. Play: “Lola Montez The Spider Dancer” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65649
Denny, Melcena Burns. Essay: “Who was Black Bart?” Pasadena, Calif. Undated HM 65651
Denny, Melcena Burns. Short story: “Lola Montez, the Spider Dancer” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65652
Denny, Melcena Burns. Notes on Black Bart, b. 1829 Pasadena, Calif. Undated HM 65653
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Notes on Edward C. Hopkins [Pasadena, Calif.]. 1967, July 19 HM 65654

Box 2

Lyrics, music, and other materials

[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Cabbage song” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65655
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Duet, Max and Lola” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65656
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Egg song” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65657
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Flower girls’ song” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65658
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Forty-niner miners” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65659
Denny, Melcena Burns. Lyrics for “Have you seen a spider dance?” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65661
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “I flash my eyes” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65662
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Life is glorious adventure” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65663
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Lola’s palace” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65664
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Love is a pipe” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65665
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Oh California mine” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65666
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “The porpoise” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65667
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Roarin’ Bill Yucca” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65668
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “The snappin’ turtle of the Sacramento” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65669
[Denny, Melcena Burns]. Lyrics for “Wheat song” [San Gabriel, Calif.]. Undated HM 65670

Hopkins, Edward C.]. Lyrics for “Lola’s parting song” [Monterey, Calif.]. Undated HM 65671
Hopkins, Edward C. Music for “Duet: Chi-chi and Lola,” “Group song: Gold-digging girls,” and “Duet: Max and Pearl” [Monterey, Calif.]. Undated HM 65672
Hopkins, Edward C. Music for “Egg song” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65673
Hopkins, Edward C. Music for “Flower girls” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65674
Hopkins, Edward C. “Incidental music for Lola Montez” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65675
Hopkins, Edward C. Music for “Lola’s palace” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65676
Hopkins, Edward C. Music and lyrics for “Lola’s parting song” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65677
[Hopkins, Edward C.]. Music for “Max and Lola” [Monterey, Calif.]. Undated HM 65678
Hopkins, Edward C. Music for “Tarantella the spider dance” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949 HM 65679
Hopkins, Edward C. Music and lyrics for “Whip song” [Monterey, Calif.]. 1949
HM 65679
Ephemera. 25 pieces. 1946-1961
Clippings. 60 pieces. 1946-1961
Poster: “Black Bart.” 1946
Poster: “Lola Montez.” Undated