Fred S. Meady Correspondence: Finding Aid

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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Overview of the Collection
Title: Fred S. Meady Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1878-1889
Collection Number: mssHM 72024-72079
Creator: Meady, Fred S.
Extent: 58 Items.
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: This collection consists of letters written by Fred S. Meady (died 1913), who worked on steam and cargo ships, and his wife, Sarah Meady, dating from 1878-1889. Fred's letters describe life at sea, and Sarah's describe life at home in Maine, and on the ships when she joined Fred.

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]. Fred S. Meady Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Purchased from Carmen D. Valentino, December 30, 2008.

Biographical Note
Fred S. Meady worked on steam and cargo ships and often spent months at sea or waiting in various ports for the ships to be loaded with cargo such as cotton, sugar, and coal. He often traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, but also made trips to Galveston, Texas; Port Costa, California; San Francisco, California; Le Havre, France; Liverpool, England; and Ilo Ilo, Philippines. He married Sarah Sager, from Gardiner, Maine, on November 26, 1879, and she joined him on ship for several trips, including voyages to Hong Kong, Liverpool, and various ports within northern California. Sarah had at least two brothers, George and Henry, and possibly a sister named Annie.

Scope and Content
The collection consists of letters related to Fred's life at sea and Sarah's life at home and on the ships when she joined Fred. Many of the letters are from Fred to Sarah (whose nickname was Sade) and from Sarah to her family, but there are also letters written to Sarah from various friends. Letters to Sarah are often addressed to "Sade," and she signed many of her letters as "Sade" as well. The bulk of Fred's letters to Sarah are from various ships and ports, as are Sarah's letters to her family.

Fred seemed to miss his wife a great deal when he was at sea, and many of his letters are about his desire to be home with her or to have her on board more often. He discusses his health in many of the letters and he seems to have battled rheumatism quite often. Other topics include the day-to-day life of living on a ship, details about the type and amount of cargo being loaded and carried, the "sea risk" clause in his life insurance policy, his friendship with a Captain Blethen, and his concern that Sarah is seeking employment in a shop he does not find acceptable. Fred mentions some specific ships, including the S.S. Dale. A letter to Mrs. Sager relates his current work and his plans for the next ship he'll board.

Sarah's letters to her family also tell of daily life on the ships (how the ships are cleaned, how they are secured during rough weather), of the stewards she befriended on board, and of the acquaintances she made while traveling with her husband (such as other couples who were also traveling by sea). She relates details about the specific places they visited and about the social calls she paid. Several of Sarah's letters to her brothers reveal her concerns that they grow into responsible, mature men. Sarah also discusses her health a great deal and she battled whooping cough at some point.
The letters to Sarah from her various friends and acquaintances are mainly about family visits, social calls, various entertainments, and news and gossip from home. One letter, from Benjamin Thompson, is an invitation to lunch and includes a calling card.

Finally, there are several loose envelopes and various calling cards not attached to any specific letters.

**Arrangement**
Arranged chronologically.

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

**Subjects**
Meady, Fred S.
Ocean travel -- 19th century.
Merchants -- United States -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Women -- United States -- Social life and customs -- 19th century.
Hong Kong (China) -- Description and travel.
San Francisco (Calif.) -- Description and travel.

**Forms/Genres**
Letters (correspondence) -- 19th century.

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**Box 1**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Identification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1878, Jan. 31</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72024</td>
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<tr>
<td>1878, Oct. 12</td>
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<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. This letter also contains a handwritten poem, an art gallery catalogue, and an envelope. HM 72025</td>
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<td>1880, Sep. 3</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72026.</td>
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<td>1880, Nov. 14</td>
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<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72027</td>
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<td>1880, Nov. 28</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72028</td>
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<td>1880, Dec. 8</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Mrs. Sager. HM 72029</td>
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<td>1881, Mar. 29</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72030</td>
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<td>1881, Apr. 7</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72031</td>
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<td>1881, May 20</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
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<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
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<td>1882, Nov. 21-Dec. 9</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72036</td>
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<td>1883, July 11</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
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<td>1883, Dec. 4</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72041</td>
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<td>1884, Apr. 27</td>
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<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72042</td>
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<td>1884, May 9</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>Annie. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72043</td>
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<td>1884, May 16</td>
<td>Meady, Fred S.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72044</td>
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<td>1884, Aug. 8</td>
<td>Annie.</td>
<td>1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72045</td>
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<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
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<td>1884, Oct. 17</td>
<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to “My Dear Ones at Home.” HM 72047</td>
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<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to “My Dear Ones at Home.” HM 72048</td>
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<td>1884, Nov. 15</td>
<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to Jane Oakes. With envelope. HM 72049</td>
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<td>[1884?], Dec.</td>
<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to Jane Oakes. With envelope. HM 72050</td>
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<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to “My Dear Brother.” HM 72052</td>
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<td>1885, June 5</td>
<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to “My Dear Ones at Home.” HM 72053</td>
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<td>Meady, Sarah.</td>
<td>1 letter to Henry Sager. With envelope. HM 72054</td>
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1885, June 25. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Jane Oakes. Several tears on edges and on spine. HM 72055
1885, July 14. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to George Sager. HM 72056
1885, July 25. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Jane Oakes. HM 72057
1886, Jan. 4. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Jane Oakes. HM 72058
1886, Jan. 13. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to “My Dear Brothers.” With envelope. HM 72059
1886, Feb. 1. Thompson, [Benjamin]. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. This letter includes a calling card from Belle A. Gould. HM 72060
1886, Apr. 14. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to George Sager. HM 72062
1886, May 27. ----, Aldo. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72063
1886, June 4. Hatfield, Adda. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72064
1886, Aug. 1. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Henry Sager. HM 72065
1886, Aug. 5. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Henry Sager. HM 72066
1886, Aug. 27. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to George Sager. HM 72067
1886?, Aug. 27. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to “My Dear Boys.” HM 72068
[approx. 1884-1886], Jan. 31. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Jane Oakes. HM 72069
1888, Feb. 5. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. Several tears on edges and on spine. HM 72070
1888, Feb. 25. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. HM 72071
1888, July 19. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72073
1889, Mar. 19. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72074
1889, Apr. 9. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72075
1889, Apr. 19. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72076
1889, Apr. 24. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72077
[undated]. Meady, Fred S. 1 letter to Sarah Meady. With envelope. HM 72078
[undated]. Meady, Sarah. 1 letter to Henry Sager. HM 72079
Calling Cards. 4 items.
Loose envelopes. 8 items.