Washington Irving Way Letters: Finding Aid

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Washington Irving Way Letters

Dates (inclusive): 1894-1924

Collection Number: mssWY 1-174


Extent: 174 pieces in 3 boxes.

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Language: English.

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Preferred Citation

Provenance
Gift of William W. Clary, November 1948.

Biographical Note
Washington Irving Way (1853-1931) was an American author, literary agent and book distributor. He was a lifelong friend, business associate and agent for Maine publisher Thomas Bird Mosher (1852-1923), whose books he helped to distribute in California.

Scope and Content
The collection contains letters and ephemera pertaining to the life and work of publisher Thomas Bird Mosher. The vast majority of the letters are from Mosher to his friend W. Irving Way and discuss business matters relating to the distribution of Mosher's books. Some letters in the collection also address Mosher's writing and the shaping of his books, as well as his opinions on current events and personalities. Issues addressed within the correspondence include Thomas Bird Mosher and his writing and 20th century American literature. Correspondents include Milton James Ferguson, Flora M. Lamb, and Mosher.

Persons represented by 2 or more pieces:
- Ferguson, Milton James (13 items)
- Lamb, Flora MacDonald (10 pieces)
- Mosher, Thomas Bird (147 items)

Some notable items include:
- Mosher, Thomas Bird. 1906, April 26. Mentions San Francisco earthquake and fire.
- ------. 1910 May J. "...You and I know better than to write books. It is bad enough to try and sell them."
- ------. 1922 October 16. "I am going home to-night to read the second volume of D.B. Updike's treatise on Printing Types. I have read the first volume and enjoyed it. It is a wonderful book published by the Harvard Press of Cambridge. Old Updike has done himself proud. I have only met him once or twice and I never wanted to meet him again. He is bumptious and rather unpleasant, but his book is a wonderful piece of work."

Arrangement
The collection is arranged chronologically in 3 boxes, with two folders of miscellaneous ephemera at the end of Box 3.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the [Huntington Library's Online Catalog](https://www.huntington.org).

**Subjects**

Mosher, Thomas Bird, 1852-1923 -- Correspondence.
American literature -- 20th century.
Authors, American -- Correspondence.

**Forms/Genres**

Ephemera -- United States -- 20th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 20th century.

**Additional Contributors**

Ferguson, Milton J. (Milton James), 1879-1954.
Lamb, Flora M.
Mosher, Thomas Bird, 1852-1923.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>1894-1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2</td>
<td>1914-1915</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 3</td>
<td>1916-1924; Ephemera</td>
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</tbody>
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The two folders of miscellaneous ephemera at the end of Box 3 include some envelopes; cards; clippings; notes from Mosher; a 1927 Christmas card from Mary Perry King and Bliss Carman; materials related to the printing of the *The Jolly Beggars: A Cantata by Robert Burns*, published by Mosher in 1914, and book catalogs for Mosher Books (1916, 1923, 1926).