Finding Aid for the Jesse Collings Tour in the United States and Canada, 1899

Cataloged by Jonathan Naito, with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, September 2004; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Jesse Collings Tour in the United States and Canada
Date (inclusive): 1899
Collection number: 170/605
Creator: Collings, Jesse, 1831-1920
Extent: 188 leaves : paper, ill. : 265 x 220 mm. bound to 285 x 233 mm.
Abstract: The bulk of this manuscript is comprised of typewritten letters authored by Jesse Collings, Britain's Under-Secretary of the Home Office from 1896-1902, describing places visited during his 1899 trip to North America. The typescript is supplemented with illustrations, photographs, ephemera, and three short essays focused primarily on the Civil War and its aftermath.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Processing Note
Cataloged by Jonathan Naito, with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, September 2004, in the Center For Primary Research and Training (CFPRT).
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Jesse Collings Tour in the United States and Canada (Collection 170/605). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.
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Biography
Jesse Collings (1831-1920) was a native of Devonshire, though he lived most of his life in Birmingham. He started out with the mercantile firm of Booth & Co. before moving into politics, serving as mayor of Birmingham before representing Ipswich (1880-1886) and Bordesley (1886-1918) in Parliament. Collings is best known for authoring an important land reform bill, the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill, often referred to as the "three acres and a cow" policy. Collings served as Under-Secretary for the Home Office from 1896-1902. One of the reasons he undertook the journey to North America was an invitation to witness the America's Cup yacht race, but his letters show that his interest in the race was minimal. Instead, he used his time to explore Canada and the United States. Collings wrote several books on land and education reform and other issues that he saw as central to Britain; his publications include "The land question from the labourer's point of view" (1885), "The colonization of rural Britain; a complete scheme for the regeneration of British rural life" (1914), and "The great war: its lessons and its warnings" (1915).
Scope and Content
This manuscript consists of typescript letters written by Jesse Collings for his family during his trip to Canada and the United States in 1899, supplemented with illustrations, photographs, American newspaper clippings featuring interviews with Collings, menus, a brochure for the Canadian Pacific Railway, and a Confederate ten-dollar bill. In addition, an "addenda" section includes notes, three short essays, and four published opinion pieces by Collings, most of which concern what he considered to be Britain's misguided support for the Confederacy during the Civil War.
His major stops during his trip included Quebec, Niagara Falls, Victoria, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Denver, Chicago, New York, Boston, Washington D.C., and Virginia. His letters address topics like the relationship between French and English in Canada, Chinese and Japanese immigrants, the Gold Standard controversy in Colorado, Mormonism in Utah, and American political corruption. The newspaper articles demonstrate that he was often expected to speak on behalf of the British
government, especially on Canada's future prospects and the issue of the Boer War. While Collings was publicly optimistic about the war, he is more ambivalent in his personal letters.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Genres and Forms of Material
Manuscripts.

Related Material
Bound Manuscripts Collection (Collection 170). Available at the UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

ff. 1r: blank
ff. 2r-8r: Onboard the Campania from Liverpool to New York
ff. 8r-11r: New York City and Albany
ff. 12r-24r: Quebec and Montreal; photographs (some hand-colored), illustrations, and menus
ff. 24r-38r: Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara Falls; photographs and illustrations
ff. 38r-63r: Western Canada: Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, and British Columbia, especially Calgary, Winnipeg, and Vancouver

Scope and Content Note
clippings from The Winnipeg Daily Tribune and Victoria Daily Times; brochure from the Canadian Pacific Railway; illustrations and photographs, including a three-panel panorama of Vancouver

ff. 58r-71r: Seattle, San Francisco; clipping from Seattle Daily Times
ff. 71r-92r: Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, and Iowa

Scope and Content Note
with extensive comments on Salt Lake City and Denver; menu from the Rio Grande Western Railway; clippings from Daily News Denver and Denver Evening Post

ff. 92r-101r: Chicago

Scope and Content Note
including a meeting with President McKinley; photographs and illustrations

ff. 101r-129r: Pittsburg, Washington D.C., Richmond, Philadelphia

Scope and Content Note
photographs and illustrations

ff. 129r-152r: New York, Boston, Cambridge

Scope and Content Note
photographs and illustrations

ff. 154r-160r: Notes on Canadian agriculture, education in America, and the Museum of Philadelphia
ff. 161r-166r: essay titled "War of Independence"
ff. 167r-179r: essay titled "The Rebellion and Civil War in America"

Scope and Content Note
ten-dollar bill from the Confederacy tipped in

ff. 180r-184r: essay titled "The Southern Question" with holograph corrections
ff. 185r: newspaper clipping titled "The American Question and 'The Western Times';", signed J.C. and dated June 2, 1862
ff. 186r-187r: newspaper clippings

Scope and Content Note

an exchange between Collings and the editor of the Devon Weekly Times about the conduct of General Butler in New York, dated November 30-December 7, 1864; also a short article titled “Mr. Coleridge on Church Rates and Popular Institutions”, signed J.C. and dated September 15, 1862

ff. 188: blank