Finding Aid for the Charles Lanman Papers, 1840-1892

Processed by James V. Mink; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé and edited by Josh Fiala.

UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections
Manuscripts Division
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Charles Lanman Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1840-1892
Collection number: 728
Creator: Lanman, Charles, 1819-1895
Extent: 4 boxes (2 linear ft.)
Abstract: Charles Lanman (1819-1895) was an editor, librarian, and author. He also wrote travel accounts of his explorations in wilderness areas of the eastern United States, and is best known as the publisher of the Dictionary of Congress, first issued in 1859. The collection consists of holograph manuscripts of Lanman's published works, portions of two unpublished manuscript autobiographies, manuscripts of his works on travel in the U.S., and his biographical sketches.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library. Department of 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, Department of Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Charles Lanman Papers (Collection 728). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.
UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 1973058
Biography
Lanman was born on June 14, 1819 in Monroe, Michigan; worked ten years at a business in New York City before returning to Michigan to edit the Monroe gazette in 1845; the next year was the associate editor of the Cincinnati chronicle, and in 1847 was an assistant on the New York express; in 1849 he became librarian of the War Department in Washington, D.C.; in 1850 he became librarian of copyrights and private secretary of Daniel Webster, and in 1853 examiner of depositories for the southern states; from 1855-57 he served as librarian and head of the returns office in the Interior Department, in 1866 the librarian of the House of Representatives, and from 1871-82, secretary to the Japanese legation; wrote travel accounts of his explorations of wilderness areas of the eastern United States; best known as the publisher of the Dictionary of Congress, first issued in 1859; he died in 1895.
Scope and Content
Collection consists of holograph manuscripts of Charles Lanman's published works, all with revisions for editions that were never published. Also includes portions of two unpublished manuscript autobiographies. Contains manuscripts of his works on travel in the U.S. and his biographical sketches.
Expanded Scope and Content
The letters, papers and manuscripts of Charles Lanman (1819-1895) are scattered in a number of repositories throughout the United States. This small collection of Lanman's writings was purchased in 1960 from W.H. Lowdermilk & Company, booksellers, Washington, D.C., with the assistance of Dr. E. Maurice Bloch of the Department of Art, UCLA.
Lowdermilk & Company purchased the Charles Lanman Library, and apparently this collection of manuscripts was among the books in the library. The library has long since been dispersed, however, the manuscripts were retained and were discovered in 1960 by Dr. Bloch in the basement of Lowdermilk & Company, Washington, D.C.
The collection contains some of Lanman's published and unpublished works. Two Lanman letters, purchased by the Library in 1940, have been added to the collection. The following is a register with description of the items in the collection.
James V. Mink
Organization and Arrangement

Arranged in the following series:

1. **Eventide recollections, My ships of thought, or, A booklover's monologue** (Box 1).
3. “Adventures of an angler in Canada,” Letters from the Alleghany Mountains and the source of the Potomac, “A summer in the wilderness,” “A tour to the River Restigouche,” “A winter in the South,” “From the River Potomac to Mount Desert,” “In the evening twilight” (Box 4).
4. Correspondence (Boxes 3-4).

Indexing Terms

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

**Subjects**

Lanman, Charles, 1819-1895--Archives.
Authors, American--19th century--Archives.
Librarians--United States--Archival resources.

Travelers' writings, American.

**Genres and Forms of Material**

Manuscripts for publication.

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**Autobiography and Reminiscences of Charles Lanman**

Scope and Content Note

Contained in two manuscripts written in his later life and apparently unpublished: *Eventide Recollections and My Ships of Thought; or a Booklover's Monologue*.

**Box 1, Folders 1-6**

**Eventide Recollections. Washington, D.C. ca. 1890**

“A family monologue” (pages missing).

Note

Missing, March 2003 (JF).

**Box 1, Folder 2**

“Lamaniana” [and Charles James Lanman].

**Box 1, Folder 3**

“Recollections of New York.”

Note

Missing, March 2003 (JF).

**Box 1, Folder 4**

“Newspaper Recollections.”

Note

Missing, March 2003 (JF).

**Box 1, Folder 5**

“Artistic Recollections.”

Note

Missing, March 2003 (JF).

**Box 1, Folder 6**

“Literary Recollections.”

Note

Missing, March 2003 (JF).
Box 1, Folder 7  
*My Ships of Thought; or a Booklover's Monologue.* Washington, D.C. ca. 1892

Scope and Content Note
Includes recollections concerning the publication of his *Dictionary of congress.*

Note
A copy in Negative microfilm collection, no.04721.

**Manuscripts**

Scope and Content Note
Containing biographies of various persons, chiefly Americans, with whom Lanman was acquainted. Many of these were written for newspapers and were later collected and published in his *Haphazard Personalities; Chiefly of Noted Americans* (Boston: Lee and Shephard; New York: C.T. Trillingham, 1886). Each biography is paginated separately; many are corrected drafts, with additions, of articles published at an earlier date.

Box 2, Folders 1-3  
*Haphazard Personalities*. Washington, D.C. ca. 1885

[No further description available].

Note
Restricted for Dr. Bloch, Art Department.

Box 2, Folder 4  
*Curious Characters and Pleasant Places.* Published: Edinburgh. 1881

**“Presidential Recollections.”** Washington, D.C. ca. 1890

Scope and Content Note
Revisions, with additions, of a newspaper article published earlier.

[Contains 2 letters from James A. Garfield, March 28, 1874 and January 24, 1871 and one from Chester A. Arthur, April 28, 1881]

Box 3, Folder 1  
*Octavius Perinchief.* Washington, D.C. [published]. 1879

**“Letters from a Motley Crew.”** Washington, D.C. ca. 1889

Note
Published as part of his *Riverside Essays*.

Box 3, Folder 2  
**“Recollections of Michigan.”** Washington, D.C.[?].

Scope and Content Note
Revisions, with a few additions, of an article published earlier.

Box 3, Folder 3  
*“Letters from a Motley Crew.”* Washington, D.C. ca. 1889

Note
Published as part of his *Riverside Essays*.

Box 3, Folder 4  
*“An Quixotic Yankee.”* Washington, D.C.[?].

**“The Old Connecticut Acadamy.”** Washington, D.C.[?].

Scope and Content Note
Revision, with a few corrections, of an earlier work.

Box 3, Folder 5  
**“Narrow Escapes.”** Washington, D.C.[?].

Scope and Content Note
Revision, with corrections and additions, of an earlier article.

Box 3, Folder 6  
[Untitled (first page missing) manuscript] Washington, D.C.[?].

Scope and Content Note
[Recollections of Washington, D.C. in the post Civil War years.]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 1</th>
<th>[“Adventures of an Angler in Canada, . . .”] [1848]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>A revision, with additions and corrections, of his earlier work on angling for inclusion in his <em>Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces</em> (Philadelphia: J.W. Moore, 1856).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 2</th>
<th>“Letters from the Alleghany Mountains and the Sources of the Potomac.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C. ca. 1856</td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revised draft, with additions and corrections, for inclusion in his <em>Adventures in the Wilds of the United States...</em>, 1856.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 3</th>
<th>“A Summer in the Wilderness....” Washington, D.C. 1856</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Revised draft of an earlier work (“A Summer in the Wilderness; Embracing a Canoe Voyage on the Upper Mississippi and Lake Superior.” New York: D. Appleton &amp; Company; Philadelphia: G.S. Appleton, 1847) with additions and corrections for his <em>Adventures in the Wilds of the United States...</em>, 1856.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 4</th>
<th>“A Tour to the River Restigouche.” Washington, D.C. [?]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Revision, with corrections and additions, of a section of his <em>Adventures in the Wilds of the United States</em>, 1856.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 5</th>
<th>“A Winter in the South.” Washington, D.C. [?]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Revision, with corrections and additions, of a section of his <em>Adventures in the Wilds of the United States...</em>, 1856.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 6</th>
<th><em>From the River Potomac to Mount Desert.</em> Washington, D.C. [?].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>A manuscript composed of earlier articles with corrections and additions [Unpublished?].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 7</th>
<th><em>In the Evening Twilight.</em> 1813</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Manuscript of some poems by Lanman[?].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 8</th>
<th><em>Two letters from Charles Lanman.</em> 1862 and 1875</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>To Benjamin Perley Poore (June 19, 1862). To John Neafie (February 20, 1875). The letter to Benjamin P. Poore contains a reference to President Abraham Lincoln and Charles Summer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 8</th>
<th>Letter to D. Appleton &amp; Company.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 9</th>
<th><em>Two letters to Lanman.</em> 1867 and 1875</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>From Congressman R.P. Spalding (1867). From Congressman Scott Lord (1875).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>