Descriptive Summary

Title: Clay Burton Vance astrology reading collection
Date: November 1911
Collection Number: MS 079
Creator: Prather, Elmer Sidney, 1872-
Extent: 0.21 linear feet (1 box)
Repository: Rivera Library. Special Collections Department.
Riverside, CA 92517-5900
Abstract: The collection consists of correspondence and an astrological life reading created by Clay Burton Vance, a conman in the early 20th century who became well known internationally for selling false astrological readings. Vance, which was the pseudonym of Elmer Sidney Prather, would sell personal "Complete Life Readings" to people for a large fee, but provided them with a mass produced reading instead. Materials in the collection include a letter from Vance to a Miss E.B. Bell of Nunthorpe, England written in 1911, selling her the reading, as well as the actual "Complete Life Reading" for Miss Bell sent shortly thereafter.
Languages: The collection is in English.
Access
This collection is unprocessed. Please contact Special Collections & University Archives regarding the availability of materials for research use.
Publication Rights
Material is in the public domain. No restrictions on use.
Preferred Citation
[identification of item], [date if possible]. Clay Burton Vance astrology reading collection (MS 079). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
Acquisition Information
Purchased in 2020.
Collection Scope and Contents
The collection consists of correspondence and an astrological life reading created by Clay Burton Vance, a conman in the early 20th century who became well known internationally for selling false astrological readings. Vance, which was the pseudonym of Elmer Sidney Prather, would sell personal "Complete Life Readings" to people for a large fee, but provided them with a mass produced reading instead. Materials in the collection include a letter from Vance to a Miss E.B. Bell of Nunthorpe, England written in 1911, selling her the reading, as well as the actual "Complete Life Reading" for Miss Bell sent shortly thereafter.
Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Subjects
Astrology
Mail Fraud
Mail-order business
Genres and Forms of Materials
Correspondence