Descriptive Summary
Title: Ann Harris and Richard Chandler correspondence
Date (inclusive): 1804-1807
Date (bulk): 1805-1807
Collection Number: MS 265
Creator: Chandler, Richard
Creator: Harris, Ann.
Physical Description: 1.73 linear feet (1 box)
Repository: Rivera Library. Special Collections Department.
Riverside, CA 92517-5900
Abstract: This collection is primarily composed of autograph letters and drafts written by Ann Harris and Richard Chandler between October 1804 and September 1807. The bulk of the material is finished letters written from Harris to Chandler. Material attributed to Chandler consists of nine draft letters to Harris. This collection also includes a small selection of letters written by friends and family of the main correspondents. Topics include local society gossip, working-class social conditions, courtship, love and marriage, and financial concerns.
Languages: The collection is in English.
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
Material is in the public domain. No restrictions on use.
Preferred Citation
[identification of item]. Ann Harris and Richard Chandler correspondence, MS 265. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside.
Processing History
Processed by Sara Seltzer, 2009.
Biographical Note
While nothing is known about Ann Harris or Richard Chandler apart from the contents of this collection, their three-year correspondence provides tremendous insight into the history of working-class women in early nineteenth-century England. The finished letters of Ann Harris tell a story of a woman constantly searching for independence and self-worth in a social class without privilege and only limited freedom. The drafts of Richard Chandler, though minimal both in extent and information, present a man in pursuit of love and happiness struggling to attain what he most wants. The words of Harris and Chandler reveal a deeply loving and troubled relationship that echoes the difficult realities of working-class life at this time.
From 1804 to 1805, Harris was employed as a governess, and briefly a nurse, in the English town of Hereford, County Herefordshire. The fall of 1804 marked the beginning of her acquaintance with Richard Chandler, a young man from the country village of Prestbury, County Gloucestershire. In her correspondence, Harris confided the hardships and frustrations of working-class life to her new friend. Her letters are often filled with descriptions of exhausting work days and the lack of freedom associated with such a lifestyle. Ann's day-to-day existence was significantly circumscribed by the obligations owed to her employers, duties that limited both her social life and her privacy. Indeed, Harris' relationship with Chandler was greatly affected by her situation, her letters pointing to meetings arranged clandestinely, the risk of discovery never entirely eliminated or avoided.
Despite such obstacles, Harris and Chandler perpetuated a promising romance that led to an engagement in October, 1805. In November of that year, however, Ann was given the opportunity to work for her brother in London, a position she eagerly wished to take. With Richard's blessing, she took up residence with her brother, working in his newly purchased public house as a barmaid. Harris' tenure in London, rather than granting her the liberation and independence she desperately craved, was plagued with additional unhappiness. Her letters of this period speak of dashed hopes and continued feelings of imprisonment, sentiments that fueled her decision to break all ties with Chandler in August, 1806.
Though Ann's silence was not permanent, communication with Chandler resuming by February, 1807, the prospect of one day marrying is notably absent from her subsequent correspondence. Harris' remaining letters for the year 1807 emphasize her loyal friendship to Richard and her ever-present desire to find and secure a better opportunity for herself. Richard's drafts, on the other hand, point to a renewed desire on his part to not only correspond with Ann, but still fulfill the dream of a happy marriage with her.

Ann Harris and Richard Chandler correspondence

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The abrupt termination of their correspondence in September, 1807 thus provokes many unanswered questions. In her last letter to Chandler, Harris' decision to again stop all communication is credited to Richard's ignoring a loan request made by her in August. However, the absence of further responsive drafts by Chandler leaves the couple's tumultuous correspondence without closure. Though financial troubles appear to be responsible, attributing the split to a single cause would be simplistic. The sudden end to the documented relationship between Ann Harris and Richard Chandler must be viewed against the broad social context which defines the collection.

1804: Ann Harris began corresponding with Richard Chandler in October. Harris moved from Cheltenham, County Gloucestershire to Newnham, County Gloucestershire in October. Harris moved to Hereford, County Herefordshire in November to work as a governess.

1805: Harris was employed as a nurse from July to September. Harris and Richard Chandler became engaged in October. Harris departed for London in December.

1806: Harris arrived in London in January to work for her brother. Harris broke her engagement and all correspondence with Richard Chandler in August.

1807: Harris resumed correspondence with Richard Chandler in February. Harris asked Richard Chandler to lend her money in August. Harris decided to again terminate correspondence with Richard Chandler in September.

Collection Scope and Content Summary
This collection is primarily composed of autograph letters and drafts written by Ann Harris and Richard Chandler between October 1804 and September 1807. The bulk of the material is finished letters written from Harris to Chandler. Material attributed to Chandler consists of nine draft letters to Harris. This collection also includes a small selection of letters written by friends and family of the main correspondents. Topics include local society gossip, working-class social conditions, courtship, love and marriage, and financial concerns.

Collection Arrangement
This collection is arranged into four series:
Series 1. Correspondence 1804.
Series 2. Correspondence 1805.
Series 3. Correspondence 1806.
Series 4. Correspondence 1807.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Subjects
19th century.
Great Britain.
Hereford (England).
London (England).
Manners and Customs.
Prestbury (England).

Genres and Forms of Materials
Correspondence.

Series 1. Correspondence, 1804.
Series Scope and Content Summary
This series is composed of letters written by Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, as well as one letter written by an anonymous source to Ann Harris. The correspondence charts Harris and Chandler's developing relationship, referring to the couple's intimate meetings across the English countryside. The letters also contain discussion of mutual friends and acquaintances, and provide insight into the character and social standing of Harris.
Series Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically.
Correspondence from "MY" to Nancy (Ann Harris). Letter regarding mutual acquaintances and local gossip. October 8, 1804.


Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Newnham, England. Note informing Richard of Ann's intent to meet him "at the place you appointed." November 6, 1804.


Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Hereford, England. Letter written seven weeks after the couple's last meeting. Content includes news of mutual acquaintances and Ann's views on marriage. February 22, 1805.


Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Hereford, England. Letter regarding the couple's prospective meeting during the Hereford races. Content provides insight into Ann's working conditions. August 9, 1805.

Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Hereford, England. Letter regarding the death of Ann's infant charge, her reluctance to return to her former station, and anxiety over her privacy. September 23, 1805.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Page 16</th>
<th>Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Hereford, England. Letter regarding a marriage between Ann and Richard and discussion of mutual acquaintances. October 12, 1805.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Page 18</td>
<td>Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, Hereford, England. Letter regarding the couple's engagement. Content includes Ann's concerns about the &quot;marriage state&quot; and desire to leave her present employment. October 30, 1805.</td>
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**Series 3. Correspondence. 1806.**

**Series Scope and Content Summary**
This series contains letters written by Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, a draft version of correspondence from Richard Chandler to Ann Harris, and notes written by other correspondents to Richard Chandler. Ann's letters are primarily concerned with her employment in London and intended marriage to Richard. Notes addressed to Richard refer to travel plans and social engagements.

**Series Arrangement**
This series is arranged chronologically.

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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Page 28</td>
<td>Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, London, England. Note chasting Richard for neglecting to write. Includes reference to a meeting that was to have occurred in London, England. May 11, 1806.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Page 29</td>
<td>Correspondence from Sarah Chandler to Richard Chandler, Prestbury, England. Note from Richard's mother inquiring when he is to return home. Correspondence sent to a London, England address. July 4, 1806.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series 3. Correspondence. 1806.

Box 1, Page 31
Correspondence from Ann Harris to Richard Chandler, London, England. Letter regarding Ann's decision to break off the engagement and desire to end all correspondence with Richard. August 6, 1806.

Box 1, Page 32
Correspondence from Herbert Herbert(?) to Richard Chandler, Frampton, England. Note inviting Richard and his sister to dine with Mr. Herbert's family over Christmas. December 20, 1806.

Series 4. Correspondence. 1807.

Series Scope and Content Summary
This series contains letters written by Ann Harris to Richard Chandler and draft versions of correspondence from Richard Chandler to Ann Harris. Letters document the couple's increasingly tumultuous relationship. Topics include marriage, employment, personal finances, and character.

Series Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Page 33

Box 1, Page 34

Box 1, Page 35

Box 1, Page 36
Draft version of correspondence from Richard Chandler to Ann Harris. Letter regarding Richard's continued affection for Ann and his wish for her to remain nearby. April, 1807.

Box 1, Page 37
Draft version of correspondence from Richard Chandler to Ann Harris, Prestbury, England. Letter regarding Richard's wish to marry Ann once he has a "situation." April, 1807.

Box 1, Page 38
Draft version of correspondence from Richard Chandler to Ann Harris, Prestbury, England. Letter regarding Richard's continued affection for Ann and his wish for her to remain nearby. April 26, 1807.

Box 1, Page 39
Fragment of paper with inscription "Miss Harris Mrs. Nixon's / 19 Princes St. / Hanover Square." circa April, 1807.

Box 1, Page 40

Box 1, Page 41

Box 1, Page 42

Box 1, Page 43

Box 1, Page 44

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