



**Walter Havighurst Special Collections
Miami University Libraries**

**Miscellanea Collection
1776-2002**

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Title:	Miscellanea Collection
Dates:	1776-2002
Media:	Correspondence, manuscripts, photographs and printed material
Quantity:	Two filing cabinets
Location:	Closed stacks

COLLECTION SUMMARY

This collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, photographs and printed material by or about notable individuals in literature, the arts, and history. Several documents provide insight into the history of Miami University and many Ohio communities.

PROVENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

Many items in this collection were left to the Walter Havighurst Special Collections by the estate of Robert B. Sinclair. A member of Miami University's Department of English from 1925 until his retirement in 1969, Dr. Sinclair made special study of William Dean Howells' works, publishing critical essays on Howells. Dr. Sinclair died July 28, 1974.

In a speech titled "A Collection of Autograph Letters" that is included in this collection, Sinclair provides the reason for his hobby, which is reflected by many items housed here. "A long time ago I thought it might be of interest to my students in my American literature classes if I could show them from time to time letters written by the writers whom we were studying," Sinclair writes.

Other items in this collection were either donated by other individuals or purchased by the Walter Havighurst Special Collections.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

The collection contains numerous documents written by figures prominent in literature and the arts, politics, and history, as well as daily accounts of life kept by everyday citizens in letters, diaries, printed material, and other manuscript items.

Filing Cabinet One

A December 19, 1831 letter from Catharine Sedgwick, of the prominent Sedgwick family of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to Mrs. David L. Child is in reply to Mrs. Child's query of why she is not an abolitionist. Mrs. Child is better known as Lydia Maria Child, another notable novelist of her day, whose *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833) is a landmark of the abolition movement. After referring to a recent book by Mrs. Child, Sedgwick writes, "Your literary career is the very best illustration of the genius of American education and the practicability of pure democracy."

The collection includes a letter from Margaret Junkin Preston, poet and daughter of Miami President George Junkin. In the letter, Preston reveals that she is troubled by poor eyesight and can only write two lines from one of her sonnets: "And I am ready when the thanks are said/To rise and leave the banquet satisfied." Sinclair confided that this addition to his collection of autograph letters "was a dud."

Journalism William Henry Irwin writes to Edwin Bjorkman, "I'm mighty glad you liked my work, and still more glad that you perceived what I was after – to wake up the rising generation of journalists to a sense of their real opportunities and their real problem." His best-known journalistic work was "The City That Was," an account of the April 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

The collection includes letters from L.P. Jacks, editor of *The Hibbert Journal* from 1902 until 1948, the leading journal for the free exchange of ideas on religion and philosophy in Britain. A letter dated September 4, 1914 reveals the impact of World War I on England. Jacks writes: "It is difficult now to publish in the *Hibbert* many things which would be suitable at any time. Our mission is clearly to strengthen the moral forces which are resisting the outrageous diabolism of the Prussian military system. It will be difficult for you in America to realize the state of England just now. The Hun is at our gates and it may be we shall all have to fight for our homes. This we shall do to the last man. Three of my sons are volunteering for the front. All the young men in this beautiful country district have gone. All day long the troop trains carrying recruits to the depots are thundering through the rally. The whole manhood of the nation will soon be in arms. One is no longer 'the idle singer of an idle day.'"

Two letters and a telegram from Amy Lowell to Mary MacMillan detail her plans to visit Cincinnati in May 1919. In the April 1919 letters, she provides some ideas about possible lectures that she could give, including "Some Sources of Imagist Practice," "Poetry as a Spoken Art," and "Some Musical Analogies in Modern Poetry." She advises against her reading her poems, "as none of your people have ever heard me read before. I think for beginners, or rather for people who are not used to hearing me, the reading is much the best start off." Grateful for the care being taken in the plans for her visit, she provides details of her traveling companion, Mrs. Harold Russell, and is agreeable to have lunch with any of Miss MacMillan's friends, meet society members at a post-lecture reception or dinner, and to be driven around Cincinnati for sightseeing. The day before her arrival, however, she sends a telegram stating: "I fear I shall be too tired for supper after the lecture as am not feeling at all well...think you had better not make any more engagements for me until I arrive as I am so miserable."

The collection includes Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson's remarks made on the 75th birthday celebration of Carl Sandburg, January 6, 1953. "Carl Sandburg is the one living man whose work and whose life epitomize the American dream," Stevenson said. "He has the earthiness of the prairies, the majesty of mountains, the anger of deep inland seas. In him is the restlessness of the seeker, the questioner, the explorer of far horizons, the hunger that is never satisfied. In him also is the tough strength that has never been fully measured, never unleashed, the resiliency of youthfulness which wells from within, and which no aging can destroy."

On February 27, 1963, poet Louise Bogan sent a postcard warning Louis Untermeyer, chair of poetry at the Library of Congress, about a "lady with a German-British name" seeking a "'job' in some inter-cultural capacity." On letterhead sporting a version of her initials in her distinctive hand, Fannie Hurst sends her regrets to Edwin Bjorkman that she will be unable to visit, but will send a copy of "Appassionata" with her regards and greetings.

Other literary figures appearing in the collection include poet Vachel Lindsay; correspondence from and photographs of Edna St. Vincent Millay; and a letter in which Julia Ward Howe inquires about arrangements for a lecture tour in Vermont. The collection also includes a program from Arturo Toscanini's farewell concert on April 29, 1936, inscribed by Toscanini.

Many names appearing in the collection are familiar ones in American military and political history.

The collection includes a recommendation written by George Washington on behalf of General Louis Le Begne de Presle Duportail, dated October 31, 1781. Duportail served as chief engineer of the American forces at Yorktown. Washington's praise for Duportail led to his promotion to major general in November 1781.

A letter from noted American statesman John Pendleton Kennedy wishes James Hackett a pleasant voyage to Europe and stating his regret that John Quincy Adams could not provide an introduction for him. Kennedy was also a writer of historical fiction and romances; using the pseudonym Mark Littleton, he published *Swallow Barn, Or a Sojourn in the Old Dominion*; *Rob of the Bowl: A Legend of St. Inigoe's*; and *Horse-Shoe Robinson: A Tale of the Tory Ascendancy*.

Edward Everett, U.S. Department of State, writes to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay on February 1, 1853, introducing Robert C. Schenck, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States to Brazil, before Schenck's visit to Paraguay. In addition to serving as a Union general and ambassador, Schenck graduated from Miami University in 1827.

. Abraham Lincoln's October 5, 1863 letter to the Secretary of War requests that Kate Sharp be allowed to obtain a pass to go South "to get testimony for an important law-suit." Robert E. Lee's last official Civil War plea can also be found in the collection. On April 17, 1865, he wrote General Edward Ord requesting sanctuary for General Joseph R. Davis, nephew of Jefferson Davis and an 1842 graduate of Miami University. The ink General Lee used to write the letter is diluted, illustrating that ink supply was low in Richmond at that time

Writing to Miami alumnus David Swing on March 20, 1889, P.T. Barnum states, "My chief desire is to leave a permanent 'Greatest show on earth' which shall be educational moral & amusing. I fancy that it is so well systematized & in such good hands that it will exist for a century."

A letter from Czar Nicholas I to his brother, the King of Naples, announces the birth of his grandson, Nikolai, on July 23, 1843. The collection also includes souvenirs from Theodore Roosevelt's presidential inauguration.

The collection is also a valuable resource for discovering the history of Miami University and its environs. For example, it includes a recommendation letter that Jared Mansfield, the second surveyor general of the United States, wrote on behalf of the Reverend John W. Browne, who rode on horseback from Butler County, Ohio in 1811 to raise a building fund for Miami University. Today, Mansfield is credited with adapting principles of astronomy to determine longitude and latitude on land, which was influential to the survey and settlement of the American West. Mansfield, Ohio is named in his honor.

On December 25, 1823, James Kemper, the first Presbyterian minister ordained north of the Ohio River, wrote John Reily a letter requesting information on his son's behalf about his interest in teaching at "the college at Oxford." In 1804, Kemper built a log cabin for his wife and fifteen children on a 150-acre farm called Walnut Hills in Cincinnati. Today, the oldest cabin within the Miami Purchase is part of the Sharon Woods Heritage Village. In 1830, Lane Theological Seminary opened on sixty acres of Kemper's land.

In a September 14, 1824 letter to the university's trustees, Robert Hamilton Bishop accepts the presidency of the institution. The man who served as Miami's first president until 1841 stated: "To me the hand of God has been very evident in all the circumstances which have more immediately had an influence in bringing my mind to this conclusion." On the other hand, the collection contains a list of reasons why his son, Robert Hamilton Bishop, Jr., would not accept the presidency. Writing in April 1872, a raise of \$150 at most – together with his view of a Professorship "as the most pleasant and comfortable position in life" – was not worth hazarding "whatever reputation as a teacher and guide of young men" Bishop had already gained.

The collection includes minutes of a May 21, 1827 meeting at which citizens of Oxford, Ohio established the Oxford Butler County Colonization Society, for the purpose of aiding in colonizing the free colored inhabitants of the United States on the western coast of Africa.

On November 30, 1832, Benjamin Chidlaw wrote a brief sketch of Miami University for the readers of the Ohio State Gazette who were "interested in the advancement of sound learning and literature." In his account, Chidlaw writes that Miami was established not only for the instruction of youth in liberal arts and sciences, but also for "the promotion of good education, virtue, morality and religion" so that "any young man connected with the institution shall be preferably employed." Describing the town of Oxford, Chidlaw confesses that "for many years the growth of the institution was greatly impeded several concerning obstacles greatly retarded in progress," but at the time of writing, "this institution has never been more flourishing than at the present time, nor its prospects more bright and flattering."

William French's September 1, 1834 letter to his nephew, Elijah French, provides interesting details about improvements occurring in Oxford, Cincinnati, and Dayton, Ohio, such as seminaries and roads being built and the agricultural crops grown in the area. An October 7, 1837 letter from Richardson Saunders to his father, Hugh Saunders, documents student life at Miami during that time.

Three letters from 1839 in the collection reveal Joseph Graham's feelings about his appointment as a trustee of Miami University. Already serving as a trustee for Cincinnati College, Graham requests that his brother, James Graham, be appointed instead, due to his proximity to Oxford as a Butler County resident.

The continued support of Miami alumni to their alma mater is evident throughout the collection. The collection includes a letter from Calvin Brice (Class of 1863) stating his willingness to help Miami University attempt to obtain state aid and promising to contribute to an endowment. A number of letters from Whitelaw Reid (Class of 1856) address various subjects, including accepting an invitation to deliver an address on the 75th anniversary of Miami University and supporting efforts to build the Miami University Alumni Library, funded in part through Andrew Carnegie's library-building initiative. The collection includes a program from June 16, 1910 that documents the dedication of this building.

On December 1, 1905, Booker T. Washington wrote to Miami University President Guy Potter Benton not only to express his pleasure in Benton's recent visit to Tuskegee University, but also to decline Benton's invitation for Washington to deliver an address on George Washington's birthday, February 22, 1906, because the annual Tuskegee Negro Conference was being held at the same time.

United States Senator and Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy wrote Miami University President John D. Miller a letter thanking him for his visit to Oxford in September 1959. In his letter, Kennedy said, "It was both enjoyable and gratifying for me to address the students on your impressive campus and my only regret was that my stay in Oxford was such a brief one."

Several letters in the collection are addressed to Mary MacMillan, a Cincinnati poet and playwright whose brother was Wade MacMillan, director of the Miami University Health Service from 1918 to 1935. Many other letters are addressed to Marian MacMillan, the wife of Dr. MacMillan. For example, letters from Ridgely Torrence, a Xenia, Ohio native who served as librarian at the New York Public Library, associate editor of *Cosmopolitan Magazine* (1906-1907) and the poetry editor for *The New Republic* (1920-1933). A Miami graduate, Torrence returned to Miami in 1920, teaching poetry and drama as a visiting professor during that academic year and returning as a fellow in creating writing during 1941 and 1942. Torrence's letters to Marian MacMillan reveal a strong friendship between the Torrences and the MacMillans. The collection also includes photocopies of a remembrance of Torrence written by Alfred Upham, president of Miami University and a Miami classmate of Torrence's.

The collection includes several Miami University commencement programs. For example, programs from June 30, 1853 and July 1, 1858 list titles of addresses given during the program, as well as names of

class members and honors recipients. Two letters and an autographed program document Bob Hope's role as speaker at Miami University's April 27, 1969 commencement exercises. In a letter dated June 10, 1969, Hope thanks President Phillip R. Shriver for a Miami Indian key chain and appreciates the wide coverage that Commencement received that year "because of some of the things that had to be said at that time. Let's hope all these problems are straightened out in the near future so we can enjoy this wonderful country."

Those interested in discovering more about literary societies at Miami University will find a number of letters from individuals invited to become honorary members or to deliver anniversary addresses. Writing on December 19, 1835 to accept his election as an honorary member of the Erodolphian Society, John Pendleton Kennedy states: "In the noble emulation which pervades our country to rear up valuable literary institutions, and to diffuse a taste for letters, we have what I am accustomed to regard the surest foundation for the permanent support of a free and virtuous republic. As auxiliary to that cause your society is entitled to the applause of every enlightened citizen. I hope it may long continue to accomplish the wishes of its friends." Additionally, future United States President James Garfield wrote John I. Covington on May 3, 1867, declining his invitation to deliver the annual address before Miami's literary societies. At the time of writing the letter, Garfield was a junior Congressman.

The collection also includes several items donated by Jennie Elder Suel of Oxford pertaining to her African-American ancestors. Three 19th century documents record travel of free blacks and slaves' military service in the Civil War. Two documents are free papers signed by their master so Suel's husband's grandparents could leave Virginia and come to Ohio. Another document allowed Henrietta Robinson, a slave in Kentucky in 1870, to receive the Civil War pension of Jackson Harrison, the slave she considered her husband.

Other manuscript items in the collection include President Jimmy Carter's autograph and poems by Robinson Jeffers, Louise McNeill, and Edith M. Thomas. Miscellaneous land grants are also represented here, as is a resolution granting John Cleves Symmes and his associates for six square miles of land in the Northwest Territory to establish an academy and other public schools and seminaries of learning. Minutes from a meeting of Oxford, Ohio citizens to establish the Oxford Butler County Colonization Society, for the purpose of aiding in colonizing the free colored inhabitants of the United States on the western coast of Africa, can also be found here.

Five bound transcripts of selected copies of letters from Library of Congress manuscript collections can also be found in the collection. The collections include the papers of Thaddeus Stevens, a lawyer and U.S. Representative of Pennsylvania; George Brinton McClellan, an Army officer and governor of New Jersey; Army officer William T. Sherman; Edwin McMasters Stanton, a lawyer, U.S. attorney general, and U.S. Secretary of War; and John T. Pickett, a Confederate agent in Mexico.

Many inscribed photographs of notable figures are included in the collection.

Filing Cabinet Two

The collection continues with correspondence between Samuel J. Brandenburg, librarian of Miami University from 1909 to 1922, and Columbus, Ohio architect Frank Packard regarding the construction of the Alumni Library at Miami University in 1910. Details discussed include roof leaks, placement of plaques naming rooms within the library, installation of electric lights by the library entrance, the library's elevator, and other construction-related matters. Packard's drawings for the memorial tablets

in Alumni Library can also be found in the collection. Other correspondence of Brandenburg's provides information about Joaquin Miller, an 1871 graduate of Miami University who became a poet, and Brandenburg's efforts to organize an exhibit featuring items about Miller.

Several letters to Vesalius Horr (Miami University Class of 1843) from his fellow schoolmates provide insight into student life at Miami from 1841 through 1844. Other letters from the late 1940s and early 1950s document a correspondence kept between Miami graduate Burton Frye and his professor, Robert F. Almy, and Frye's experiences as a graduate student and traveling poet.

Numerous letters from Civil War soldiers to their families at home can be found in the collection. For example, Jacob Goth's letters detail his service as a member of Company D of the 32nd Regiment of Indiana Volunteers in the period from August 24, 1861 and September 7, 1864. Other Civil War soldiers represented in this collection through their writings include John Bressler and Andrew Gowian, among others.

Many letters in this portion of the collection document the daily lives of Ohioans. Letters to Eliza Pitkin of Dresden and later Mount Vernon, Ohio provide interesting insights into slavery and abolition during the 1830s, including mention of hearing a sermon given by John Rankin on abolition. School essays by Alice and Maggie Hueston offer perspectives on topics from sugarmaking to beauty and nature, while Julia Rogers' essays for a class taught by Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon Scott at Oxford Female College present her thoughts on beauty, sentiments, books, patience, the language of passion, and "the believers and the doubters." A typescript copy of an account of the March 25, 1913 flood in Dayton, Ohio can also be found here.

Information about other academic institutions can be found in the collection. For example, a series of letters document life at Ashland University for Josiah and Sarah Keim, who ran a rooming house for boarders in that community circa 1900-1902. Invitations and programs for literary contests and commencement exercises at Ohio State University in 1883, together with the Secretary of State's report regarding Ohio University from 1884-1885 can also be found here.

Several diaries can be found in the collection, such as those kept by George Ratliff, a student at Miami University in 1863 and 1864 who later worked as a cement contractor in Middletown Ohio, and David Moore, a minister who graduated from Miami University in 1871. Mrs. Sutton C. Richey's diary of a trip to Europe in 1902 are also stored here.

Correspondence between family members provides revealing insights into 19th century life, such as the letters of the Robert Hewes family of Hamilton, Ohio to their relatives in New England. Other documents provide notes and other documentation of Mr. and Mrs. James R. Webster of Hamilton Ohio's family genealogical research.

The correspondence of James D. Turner to his wife, Lucy Turner, in Felicity, Ohio, includes sobering accounts of his trip to California prospecting for gold, from his departure in the late 1840s until his death in Nevada City, California on August 7, 1851. An itemized list of Turner's funeral expenses, together with other correspondence between Lucy Turner to her brother, L.W. Carver, who accompanied Turner on the expedition, provides additional details about Turner's experiences in California. Later letters from Annie Wittinmyer to her aunt Lucy describe her unsuccessful attempts to locate Turner's grave.

The collection includes manuscript versions of prose and poetry by William Stanley Braithwaite, an African-American poet and author. Collections of Charles Wright, Sr.'s poems and his manuscript of "Company C, 81st O.V.I." can also be found in the collection. Items of interest pertaining to Abraham Lincoln include typescript copies of "The Day Lincoln Died," by Ophia D. Smith, and David Swing's sermon on Lincoln's assassination as published in the Oxford Citizen on April 22, 1865.

Many items in this portion of the collection provide insight into Oxford, Ohio and its community organizations, including the Oxford Presbyterian Church and its Women's Foreign Missionary Society. A number of copies of Oxford newspapers, such as the Oxford Theatre Digest (1928), the Oxford Furniture Journal (1885) and the Oxford Shopping News (1932) can also be found here. Two items pertain to Helen Peabody of Western College for Women – a letter Peabody wrote to student Julia A. Rogers on January 7, 1878 expressing condolences on Rogers' recent loss, and a manuscript about Peabody's life, written by Sarah Isabella Howe. Other items in the collection that have Miami connections include a copy of a farewell sermon preached by James Hughes, a Miami trustee and minister of the Oxford Presbyterian Church, at West Liberty, Virginia on September 11, 1814.

T.L. King's invitations to the inauguration of Guy Potter Benton as president of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College (October 5-6, 1911) and as president of the University of the Philippines (December 15-17, 1921) document Benton's post-Miami career. King's invitation to the 100th anniversary of the founding of Miami University (June 12-17, 1909) can also be found in the collection.

Marriage certificates, teaching certificates, and other printed ephemera complete the collection. These include a broadside announcing the 100th anniversary celebrations of the founding of Hamilton, Ohio in September 1891, a pocket time card for the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railroad (1890) and numerous programs of and advertisements for theatrical performances held at various locations in Cincinnati in the early decades of the 20th century.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION

The collection maintains the original organization of alphabetical order by the last name of each individual represented in the collection. The collection is housed in a filing cabinet, so numbered drawers and folders are used to locate individual items.

Series I: Correspondence

Sub-Series I: General Correspondence

Sub-Series II: Literary Societies

Series II: Manuscripts

Series III: Printed Material

Series IV: Photographs

Series V: Drawings

Series VI: Objects

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Access: This collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Walter Havighurst Special Collections, Miami University Libraries.

Preferred Citation: Researchers are requested to cite the *Miscellanea Collection* and *The Walter Havighurst Special Collections, Miami University Libraries* in all footnote and bibliographic references.

Provenance: Items in this collection were either purchased by the Walter Havighurst Special Collections or were donated by individuals, including the estate of Robert B. Sinclair.

Processed By: Betsy Butler (2007-2009)

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the box and folder numbers shown below.

Series I: Correspondence

Sub-Series I: General Correspondence

Filing Cabinet	Drawer	Folder	Author	Recipient	Date	Subject
2	1	1	David Abbot	Gen. Peter Hitchcock	December 23, 1817	Sending petition of Cornelia Mason, widow of Alexander Mason
1	2	3	Franklin P. Adams	Mr. Kearny	November 27, 1915	Receipt of jam
1	2	4	John Adams	Richard Rush	June 3, 1816	Death of Mr. Dexter
2	1	5	Albert	Oma Stover	August 10, 1902	In good health, thanks to climate of Denver, Colorado; news of friends and church; description of country and recent storm
2	1	7	Franklin Albert	George Albert	May 2, 1857	List of students at the normal school; description of school