

Autograph Books

A Finding Aid

Livingston County Historian's Office
5 Murray Hill Dr.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
February 2015

I. Series Summary

Title	Autograph Books Series	
Extent	.5 cubic feet, 2 boxes; 19 items.	
Date Range	1852-1928 (bulk 1878-1890)	
Abstract	<p>This series includes personal autograph books, mainly those of young people in Livingston County. They are inscribed with signatures of friends, classmates, and relatives, sometimes with small notes, drawings, or poems. Most are typical of the era, though the series also includes a birthday book and a travel diary, which belonged to Clara F. Mann. This is of note as Miss Mann was a prominent suffragist and political figure, as well as teacher and traveler. Also of interest and included in the series is the oldest specimen, an autograph book of a married woman in the 1850s. The items are in fair condition, and each is stored in an archival polypropylene sleeve.</p>	
Names	<p>Bow, Lizzie (Miss) Brodie, William A. Dixson, Harry Edmonds, Carrie Fairchild, Georgia Fairchild, Percy Hawley, Belle M. Hopkins, F. W. Mann, Clara F. Mann, Marguerette B. McHardy, Louise (Miss) Peabody, George L. Putney, Rosa</p>	<p>Ray, Belle Rippey, Jessie (Miss) Root, Martha A. Sackett, William V. Short, Esther (Mrs.) Short, Mary A. (Miss) Sinclair, Grace Sinclair, Mary Traxler, Allie Weller, Jennie</p>
Subjects	<p>Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Geneseo Normal School—SUNY</p>	
Languages	English.	
Access and Restrictions	<p>Use of the documents in the collection is for serious research and by request and permission of the Livingston County Historian's Office. Any use of the material in publications must be cited as follows, "Courtesy of Livingston County Historian's Office, New York." Additionally, all documents should be handled with care.</p> <p>To arrange to conduct research with the documents in the collection, contact the Livingston County Historian by mail at: 5 Murray Hill Drive, Mount Morris, NY, by phone at (585) 243-7955, or by e-mail at Historian@livingstoncountyny.gov.</p>	
Copyright	No materials in this series are subject to copyright.	

II. Biographical and Background Information

Historically, autograph books or “friendship books” date back to the 16th century in Europe, but in the United States became popular in the 19th century. Their emergence is attributed to German immigrants, who brought the practice with them. The books were especially used by young people in school or university to collect the signatures of their classmates, along with drawings, poems, and other personal notes and mementoes. The practice peaked around the time of the Civil War, after which it waned. Young ladies in particular kept the fad going a bit longer, through the 1890s and during a brief resurgence around the time of World War I, but eventually, with the advent of school yearbooks, the personal autograph book relinquished its popularity.

Clara Fitzgerald Mann, whose items are included in this series, was a prominent and influential woman from Groveland, Livingston County, New York. She was daughter of Nathaniel Burrows Mann and Helen M. Budlong, who both came from long lines of hardy pioneers. She had several siblings, including Margaret B. Mann. Clara attended the Geneseo Normal School and Columbia University, and was head of the history department at Mt. Vernon High School for 34 years, retiring about 1937. She was an important leader in the woman’s suffrage movement, acting as president of the Mount Vernon Political Equality Club, and most notably ran on the Democrat ticket for New York’s 39th District seat in Congress in 1918, though she lost to the incumbent, Archie Sanders. Later in life, she was the president of the Livingston County Historical Society, and she also was known for extensive, exotic travels to many remote places in the world.

III. Contents List

109	B40-F25	Miss Mary A. Short, autograph book
202A	Box 1	Percy Fairchild, autograph book, c. 1884
202A	Box 1	Lottie _____, autograph book, 1893, from Mary Barber
202A	Box 1	Carrie Edmonds, autograph book, 1875-1876, Buffalo and Geneseo
202A	Box 1	Georgia Fairchild, autograph book, 1889-1891
202A	Box 1	Clara F. Mann, travel diary and autograph book, 1928
202A	Box 1	Miss Louise McHardy, autograph book, Fowlerville, 1879
202A	Box 1	Harry Dixson, autograph book, 1880-1881
202A	Box 1	Grace Sinclair, autograph book, 1882-1890
202A	Box 1	Mary Sinclair, autograph book, 1882-1890
202A	Box 1	Marguerite B. "Madge" Mann, autograph book, 1882-1889
202A	Box 1	F. W. Hopkins, autograph book, Geneseo Normal School, 1875
202A	Box 1	Harry [Dixson?], autograph book, Livonia and Needham, MA
202A	Box 2	Miss Lizzie Bow, autograph book, 1878-1881
202A	Box 2	William V. Sackett, autograph book, 1878-1884

202A	Box 2	Allie Traxler, autograph book, 1879-1880
202A	Box 2	Miss Jessie Rippey, autograph book, 1886
202A	Box 2	Mrs. Esther Short, autograph book, c. 1852-1858
202A	Box 2	White Ribbon Birthday Book, Martha A. Root to Belle M. Hawley, 1889
202A	Weller Box 1	Jennie Weller, autograph book, 1883-1887
203	Brodie Box 8b	William A. Brodie, autograph album
203	S2-B2	Belle Ray, autograph book and transcription, 1890-1891, Genesee Wesleyan Seminary
203	S2-B2	Belle Ray, autograph book (transcription only), 1883-1892
203	S2-B2	George L. Peabody autograph book, 1882-1885
203	Family Files	Rosa Putney, autograph book