



Guide to the Ellen A. Hedrick letters, 1900-1904

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Summary

Collection Title:

Ellen A. Hedrick letters, 1900-1904

Creator:

Hedrick, Ellen A., 1869-1957; Hedrick, Mary Ellen Thompson

Abstract:

Ellen A. Hedrick (1869-1957) was one of the eight children of Mary Ellen Thompson (1829-1905) and southern anti-slavery activist Benjamin Sherwood Hedrick (1827-1886). Collection comprises seven letters, five written by Ellen A. Hedrick during an international tour taken June-September 1904, one by Ellen's travel companion, C., in 1904, and one by her mother in 1900. Ellen Hedick's letters document her travels across England and Wales, France, Amsterdam, Holland, and Germany, with descriptions of manners, her surroundings, and modes of travel. Ellen's fellow traveler, C., also writes to an unidentified, intimate female friend, about the wedding of this friend's brother, the illness of a traveler, people she is meeting during her travels, and abundant fruit available. In her letter, Ellen's mother writes of plans she has for Ellen's visit, and requests sewing supplies for projects she has begun.

Extent:

0.1 Linear Feet (7 items)

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.11902

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1k733>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Ellen A. Hedrick letters, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection comprises seven letters, five written by Ellen A. Hedrick during an international tour taken June-September 1904, one by Ellen's travel companion, C., in 1904, and one by her mother in 1900. Ellen Hedrick's letters document her travels across England and Wales, France, Amsterdam, Holland, and Germany, with descriptions of manners, her surroundings, and modes of travel. She mentions tourists from the United States, "There are Americans here as elsewhere," and later adds her wish for Europeans to know "not all Americans are loud voiced." She describes her surroundings, including England's "perfect driveways bordered by fruit trees." She remarks on the furnishing of her apartments in Warwick, London, and Liverpool, and on the British use of antiques to create a homelike atmosphere, as well as using what one has instead of purchasing the most modern thing. She visits sites like the British Museum and Oxford, and shows her knowledge of the art of the Pre-Raphaelites, remarking on collaborations among Burne-Jones and William Morris. In France she pays close attention to manners among people, including approaches to being on time, handling luggage, or arranging seats on trains. She marvels at gardens, modes of transportation, and the difference in dress among different classes. In Amsterdam she comments on the superiority of the beer over that in America.

Three of Ellen's letters are written to her friend, Sara; the others are directed to her mother and family. Ellen's letters to Sara are more intimate, and emphasize domestic spaces of hotels, boarding houses, and ship cabins, in an attempt to help Sara imagine where Ellen is. Ellen's fellow traveler, C., also writes to an unidentified, intimate female friend, about the wedding of this friend's brother, the illness of a traveler, people she is meeting during her travels, and abundant fruit available. She adds, "I long to take this trip with you...I hope you are in good condition, sweetheart....liebling, so much love I send you, a heart just full of it." In her letter, Ellen's mother writes of plans she has for Ellen's visit, and requests sewing supplies for projects she has begun.

Biographical/Historical

Ellen A. Hedrick (1869-1957) was one of the eight children of Mary Ellen Thompson (1829-1905) and southern anti-slavery activist Benjamin Sherwood Hedrick (1827-1886). She was raised in Hayfield, Virginia, attended Smith College (B.A. 1892), and worked at the Nautical Almanac Office (1897-1900), then as a librarian at the Library of Congress, Yale University, the University of California Berkeley, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Ellen A. Hedrick letters were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 2020.

Processing Information

Processed by Alice Poffinberger, May, 2021

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2020-0019

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Related Materials

Related Material

See the Benjamin Sherwood Hedrick papers in the Rubenstein Library.

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Names and Subjects

- Conduct of life.
- Etiquette.
- Female friendship
- Friendship.
- Transportation -- Europe
- Transportation -- Social aspects -- Europe
- Travelers -- Europe -- 20th century
- Women travelers -- Europe -- History -- 20th century
- Europe -- Description and travel -- 20th century
- personal correspondence
- Hedrick, Ellen A., 1869-1957
- Burne-Jones, Edward Coley (1833-1898)
- Morris, William, 1834-1896

Collection Inventory

Letters

Folder 1