

Yale University Library  
Yale Divinity Library

# Guide to the Roy and Clara Creighton Papers

RG 177



Compiled by Alice Yafeh and Martha Lund Smalley

2001

409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301

[divinity.library@yale.edu](mailto:divinity.library@yale.edu)

<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 177

**CREATOR:** Creighton, Roy, 1889-1974

**TITLE:** Roy and Clara Creighton Papers

**DATES:** 1908-1972

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Consisting primarily of correspondence between the Creightons and family members in the U.S., this collection provides valuable detailed information about Roy Creighton's work, the life of a typical missionary wife, and the complications of raising a family on the mission field. Roy Creighton was an American architect who supervised the construction of buildings on the mission field. He served under the YMCA and Presbyterian Board in China, at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, and Robert College in Turkey. He also taught at the Engineering School of the College of Chinese Studies. Clara Creighton was a missionary wife and homemaker.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.177>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.177>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Roger L. Creighton

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Preferred Citation

Roy and Clara Creighton Papers (RG 177), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

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## Biographical / Historical

Date	Event
1889	○ Roy Lamont Creighton born
1892	○ Clara Linn born
1915	○ After graduation from Harvard, Roy went to Hangzhou (Hangchow), China as a Building Supervisor for the YMCA
1916 January	○ Move to Hankou (Hankow)
1916 August	○ Clara came out to China and they were married at Guling (Kuling)
1917	○ Roy supervised hospital construction at Boone University, Wuchang
1917 June	○ Son, Linn, born
1919-1926	○ Roy worked for Architects Bureau of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in Shanghai
1920	○ Furlough in U.S.
1921	○ Daughter, Marjory, born; died in 1922
1923	○ Son, Roger, born
1924	○ Daughter, Phyllis, born
1928	○ Following furlough in the U.S., the Creightons when to Beirut, Lebanon (Syria) where Roy supervised construction at the American University of Beirut.
1931	○ Following furlough in the U.S., the Creightons went to Istanbul, Turkey, where Roy supervised the building of a library for Robert College.
1933	○ Following furlough in the U.S., the Creightons returned to China, based in Beijing (Peking). Roy taught at Engineering School of the College of Chinese Studies and traveled to supervise construction of Presbyterian Mission buildings.
1940	○ Clara and two younger children evacuated to U.S. due to war conditions; Roy remained in Beijing (Peking).

Date	Event
1941 December	○ Roy interned by Japanese
1943 December	○ Roy repatriated to U.S.
1944	○ Roy working at New York office of Presbyterian Mission Board
1946	○ Roy to Shanghai to rehabilitate mission properties
1948	○ Roy and Clara to Shanghai, evacuated to Hong Kong
1950	○ Roy and Clara in Thailand
1952	○ Roy and Clara in New York, Presbyterian Board offices
1959	○ Roy retired
1974	○ Roy died
1978	○ Clara died

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## Scope and Contents

Many of the letters in this collection were published by Roger L. Creighton as a book entitled "84 Randall Ave. The Lives of Roy and Clara Creighton; Letters of 1908-1978" (in YDSL cataloged collection).

These papers provide valuable insight into the work of a missionary architect and building supervisor who worked primarily in China, first for the YMCA and later for the Presbyterian Mission Board. The letters are primarily from the Creightons to their family members in the U.S., at first primarily their parents and siblings, but later their children. Periodic circular letters by the Creightons provide succinct summaries of their work. The letters of Clara Creighton from China provide an excellent record of the daily life of a woman missionary who was primarily a mother and homemaker, including documentation of the social life of mainline Protestant, city-based missionaries.

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## Arrangement

- I. Correspondence, with enclosures, 1908-1972

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1908-1972

b. 1, f. 1	RLC and CLC to each other and to others; in U.S.	1908-1914
b. 1, f. 2	RLC to CLC; in U.S., on journey to China	1915
b. 1, f. 3	Roy to Clara; from YMCA Hangzhou (Hangchow) and YMCA Hankou (Hankow); includes Boone University, Wuchang, 6th Annual Commencement program	1915 January-February
b. 1, f. 4	Roy to Clara; from Hankou (Hankow)	1916 March-April
b. 1, f. 5	Primarily from Roy in Hankou (Hankow); arrangements for marriage of Roy and Clara	1916 May - June
b. 1, f. 6	Roy, Clara to various; journey of Clara to China; marriage in Guling (Kuling)	1916 July-August
b. 1, f. 7	Roy, Clara to various; from Guling (Kuling)	1916 September - October
b. 1, f. 8	Roy, Clara to various; from Hankou (Hankow)	1916 November-December
b. 1, f. 9	Primarily Roy, Clara to various; from Hankou (Hankow); birth of son (Linn)	1917 January-June
b. 1, f. 10	Roy, Clara to various; from Hankou (Hankow), Guling (Kuling)	1917 July - December
b. 1, f. 11	Roy, Clara to various; from Hankou (Hankow), Guling (Kuling)	1918 January - August
b. 1, f. 12	Roy, Clara to various; from Hankou (Hankow)	September-December 1918
b. 2, f. 13	Roy, Clara to various; from Shanghai, from Hangzhou (Hangchow)	1919 January-May
b. 2, f. 14	Roy, Clara to various; from Hangzhou (Hangchow)	1919 June-December
b. 2, f. 15	Return to U.S. on furlough	1920
b. 2, f. 16	Furlough in United States; return to Hangzhou (Hangchow); birth of daughter (Marjory); passport of Roy Creighton	1921
b. 2, f. 17	RLC, CLC to various, from Shanghai; re. death of daughter	1922 Jan-Jun
b. 2, f. 18	Roy, Clara to various; from Guling (Kuling), Shanghai; condolences re: death of daughter	1922 July - December
b. 2, f. 19	RLC, CLC to various; from Shanghai; birth of son (Roger)	1923
b. 2, f. 20	RLC, CLC to various; from Shanghai; circular letter (Feb. 11) gives overview of work with Mission Architects Bureau, news re. bandits	1924 Jan - Jul

b. 2, f. 21	Boy, Clara Creighton to various; from Beidaihe (Peitaho), Beijing (Peking), Shanghai; re: birth of daughter (Phyllis)	1924 August-December
b. 2, f. 22	RLC, CLC to various; from Shanghai; includes pamphlet "Missions and Architecture - Residences" by Charles A. Gunn and Roy L. Creighton, published by the Architects Bureau of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.	1925
b. 2, f. 23	RLC, CLC to various, from Shanghai; incl. circular letter 1926 Jan 15 re. political events, anti-Christian movement	1926-1927
b. 2, f. 24	RLC, CLC to various; from U.S., enroute to Syria, from American University of Beirut	1928
b. 2, f. 25	RLC, CLC to various; from Beirut	1929
b. 2, f. 26	RLC, CLC to various; from Beirut	1930
b. 2, f. 27	RLC, CLC to various; from U.S., enroute to Turkey, from Robert College, Istanbul; letter from Linn to grandfather	1931
b. 2, f. 28	RLC, CLC to various; from Robert College, Istanbul	1932
b. 3, f. 29	Roy, Clara to various; from U.S., enroute to China; from Hangzhou (Hangchow)	1933 January-May
b. 3, f. 30	Roy, Clara, children to various; from Beijing (Peking), Beidaihe (Petaiho)	1933 June - December
b. 3, f. 31	Roy, Clara to various; from Beijing (Peking); Linn to various en route to US	1934 January - July
b. 3, f. 32	Roy, Clara to various; from Beijing (Peking), including circular letter December 1	1934 August - December
b. 3, f. 33	Roy Creighton, Clara Creighton to various; from Beijing (Peking), Beidaihe (Peitaiho)	1935 January-June
b. 3, f. 34	Roy, Clara, to/from Linn and others; from Beijing (Peking)	1935 July-December
b. 3, f. 35	Roy, Clara, to/from Linn and others; from Beijing (Peking)	1936 January - June
b. 3, f. 36	Roy, Clara, to/from Linn and others; from Beijing (Peking)	1936 July - December
b. 3, f. 37	Roy Creighton, Clara Creighton, to and from children and others; from Beijing (Peking), Beidaihe (Peitaiho)	1937 January-August
b. 3, f. 38	Roy, Clara to/from children and others; from Beijing (Peking); newspaper clippings re. Sino-Japanese war	1937 September-December
b. 3, f. 39	Roy, Clara to/from children and others; from Beijing (Peking), return to U.S.	1938
b. 3, f. 40	Roy, Clara to/from children and others; from U.S., return to Beijing (Peking)	1939
b. 3, f. 41	Roy, Clara to/from children and others; from Beijing (Peking)	1940 January-April

b. 3, f. 42	Roy, Clara to/from children and others; from Beijing (Peking)	1940 May-December
b. 4, f. 43	Roy Creighton to family; from Beijing (Peking); includes newspaper article by Rosamund Frame, text of a talk on missionary children entitled "Children of Two Cultures"	1941 January-April
b. 4, f. 44	Roy Creighton to family; from Beijing (Peking)	1941 May - August
b. 4, f. 45	RLC to/from family; family to/from each other; RLC a war prisoner of Japanese following Dec. 7.	1941 Sep -Dec
b. 4, f. 46	Family in U.S. to RLC in internment; mimeographed China Bulletins from Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board re. interned missionaries	1942 Jan -Mar
b. 4, f. 47	To/from family members in U.S.and RLC in internment; mimeographed China Bulletin from Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board re. interned missionaries	1942 Apr-Dec
b. 4, f. 48	To/from various family members in U.S.and RLC in internment; mimeographed China Bulletins from Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board re. interned missionaries	1943 Jan -Apr
b. 4, f. 49	To/from various family members in U.S.and RLC; newspaper clipping re. repatriation of RLC	1943 May -Dec
b. 4, f. 50	To/from children; circular letter, February	1944 Jan -May
b. 4, f. 51	To/from children	1944 Jun -Dec
b. 4, f. 52	To/from children	1945 Jan -May
b. 4, f. 53	To/from family members	1945 Jun -Dec
b. 4, f. 54	To/from family members	1946
b. 4, f. 55	To/from family members	1947
b. 4, f. 56	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Shanghai	1948 Jan-May
b. 4, f. 57	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Shanghai	1948 Jun-Dec
b. 4, f. 58	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Shanghai and from Hong Kong following May evacuation	1949
b. 5, f. 59	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Hong Kong, from Thailand	1950
b. 5, f. 60	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Hong Kong, from Thailand	1951
b. 5, f. 61	RLC, CLC to/from family members and Presbyterian church women; from Hong Kong, from Thailand	1952
b. 5, f. 62	RLC, CLC to/from family members; from New York	1953-1957
b. 5, f. 63	RLC, CLC to/from family members; from New York, Maine	1958-1962
b. 5, f. 64	RLC, CLC to/from family members; from Maine	1963-1967



b. 5, f. 65

RLC, CLC to/from family members; from Maine

1968-1972

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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Architects  
Architects -- China  
Missionaries  
Missions -- China

### **Names**

Creighton, Clara, 1892-1978  
Creighton, Roy, 1889-1974

### **Contributors**

Creighton, Roy, 1889-1974  
Creighton, Clara, 1892-1978