

Yale University Library  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

# Guide to the Clarence Day Collection

YCAL MSS 583



by Beinecke Staff

2012

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 583

**CREATOR:** Day, Clarence, 1874-1935

**TITLE:** Clarence Day collection

**DATES:** 1891-1963

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3 linear feet (8 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of correspondence, writings, personal papers, and printed material documenting the career of Clarence Shepard Day. The collection provides insight into Day's work as an author, illustrator, and humorist, who often poked fun at upper class New Yorkers. The collection also documents Day's experience as an undergraduate student at Yale University in the late nineteenth-century. Correspondents include: Alfred A. Knopf and Vira Whitehouse.

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

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.day>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

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

Acquired by gift and purchase from various sources, 1939-1995. For more information consult the appropriate curator.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Clarence Day Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Clarence Day Collection. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization, in 2012.

This collection includes materials previously identified by the following call numbers: Za Day and Uncat Za Ms Day.

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## Clarence Day (1874-1935)

Clarence Shepard Day, Jr., American author, illustrator, and humorist, was born in New York City to Clarence Shepard and Lavinia Elizabeth Stockwell Day on November 18, 1874.

Day graduated from Yale University in 1896 with a Bachelor of Arts. After graduation Day worked as a stockbroker in his father's company. He trained with the U.S. Navy during the Spanish-American War, serving on the *Nahant*, which remained in the New York Harbor. Day suffered from arthritis, which forced him to leave the military and eventually to end his career as a stockbroker.

Day's illness prompted him to begin a career as a freelance writer and illustrator. He was the owner and publisher of the *Yale Alumni Weekly* (1905-1909), published pieces in *Harper's*, *New Yorker*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Yale Review*, and *New Republic*, and completed freelance work for other authors. Day also wrote book reviews and a financial column for the *Metropolitan Magazine* under the pseudonym B. H. Arkwright (1915-1921).

Day's books include: *This Simian World* (1920), *The Crow's Nest* (1921), *Thoughts without Words* (1928), *God and My Father* (1932), *In the Green Mountain Country* (1934), *Scenes from the Mesozoic* (1935), *Life with Father* (1935), *After All* (a revision of *The Crow's Nest*, 1936), and *Life with Mother* (1937). *Life with Father* was a bestseller in 1935 and 1936 and was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. The book was also adapted for theatre, film, and television.

Day married Katherine Briggs Dodge in 1928 with whom he had one daughter (Wendy Day). Day died at his home in New York City of pneumonia on December 28, 1935.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of correspondence, writings, personal papers, and printed material documenting the career of Clarence Shepard Day. The collection provides insight into Day's work as an author, illustrator, and humorist, who often poked fun at upper class New Yorkers. The collection also documents Day's experience as an undergraduate student at Yale University in the late nineteenth-century.

Day's creative life is represented in his correspondence with publisher Alfred A. Knopf, as well as in his illustrated letters to friends including Albert Galloway Keller, Mary Thompson, and Vira Whitehouse. Drafts for *Scenes from the Mesozoic* reflect Day's work as an author and humorist. The collection does not include extensive documents pertaining to Day's most well-known publication, *Life With Father*, but the Writings and Artwork Series does include letters relating to a publicity stunt in order to promote the book in Chicago. The Writings and Artwork series also represents Day's career as an author and illustrator, including his freelance illustrations for Florence Guy Seabury's *The Delicatessen Husband* and Lee Wilson Dodd's *Pegeen and the Potamus*. Some of Day's shorter pieces, such as poetry and short stories, are included in the Printed Material series.

Day's involvement with Yale University, as a student and an alumnus, are traced in his scrapbook dating from 1895 to 1897, correspondence with classmate Albert Galloway Keller, and illustrations for various alumni events from 1909 to 1960.

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## Arrangement

Organized into four series: I. Correspondence, 1892-1963. II. Writings and Artwork, 1891-1980. III. Personal Papers, 1895-1960. IV. Printed Material, 1924-1936.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1892-1963

1.67 linear feet (4 boxes)

This series documents the professional and personal life of Clarence Day (including works published posthumously) between 1892 and 1963. Most notably Day's correspondence with the Alfred A. Knopf company provides insight into his career as a writer and illustrator. The series contains both incoming and outgoing correspondence; Day frequently illustrated his correspondence with friends and family, including his letters to Yale University classmate Albert Galloway Keller, Mary Thompson, and Vira Whitehouse.

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

b. 1, f. 1-8	Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. to Clarence Day Includes correspondence with Alfred A. Knopf, Alfred William Koshland, Basil N. Bass, Stimson and a photograph of Clarence and Peg Day	1921-1962
b. 1, f. 9-16	Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. from Clarence and Peg Day	1921-1956
b. 1, f. 17	Adams, J. C., letter from Clarence Day (photostat)	1908
b. 1, f. 18	Day, George Parmly, letters from Clarence Day Includes 2 letters and 1 original pencil drawing	1892-1908
b. 1, f. 19-20	Donaldson, Norman, letters from Clarence Day	1934-1935
b. 1, f. 21	Donaldson, Norman, letters concerning Clarence Day	1934-1935
b. 2, f. 22	Fuller, Clement Austin, letters from Clarence Day Includes 3 drawings with notes	1912-1927
b. 2, f. 23	Gibney, Virgil Pendleton	1905-1915
b. 2, f. 24	Goldenbook Magazine, letter to Clarence Day	1934 November 17
b. 2, f. 25-27	Hawley, Margaret Foote, letters from Clarence Day	1919-1925
b. 2, f. 28	Hawley, Margaret Foote, letters to Clarence Day	1920-1923
b. 2, f. 29	Hawley, Margaret Foote, letters to Geoffrey Parsons	1923
b. 2, f. 30	Hawley, Margaret Foote, obituary	1963
b. 2, f. 31	Johnson, Alvin, letter to Clarence Day	1935 November 29
b. 2, f. 32	Johnson, Frederic Blair, letters from Clarence Day Includes 10 letters from Clarence Day and 2 letters from George Parmly Day to Yale University concerning the letters	1906-1924
b. 2, f. 33	Keller, Albert Galloway Contains 2 bound volumes of copies of correspondence from Clarence Day to Albert G. Keller	1903-1935
b. 3, f. 34	Keller, Carl T., letters from Clarence Day	1919-1921

b. 3, f. 35	Keogh, Andrew	1916-1935
b. 3, f. 36	Lewis, Wilmarth Sheldon, letters from Clarence Day Includes 5 letters with envelopes, original pen and ink drawing, and reproduction of a drawing	1922
b. 3, f. 37	MCA Management	1947 June 5
b. 3, f. 38	Oakley, Louis C., letters from Clarence Day Includes 11 illustrated notes	1904-1918
b. 3, f. 39-41	Thompson, Mary, letters from Clarence Day	1903-1905
b. 3, f. 42-43	Thompson, Mary, letters from Clarence Day	1906-1935
b. 3, f. 44	Welch, Lewis S. Includes 2 letters with drawings from Clarence Day and copies of his replies	1914
b. 3, f. 45-49	Whitehouse, Vira, from Clarence Day	1918-1920
b. 4, f. 50-59	Whitehouse, Vira, from Clarence Day Includes drafts of untitled poems, short stories, and a copy of <i>Max</i>	1920-1935
b. 4, f. 60	Various correspondents, including copyright agreement	1921-1939

**Series II: Writings and Artwork, 1891-1980***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

This series documents Clarence Day's career as an author and illustrator, mostly relating to his freelance illustrations for Florence Guy Seabury's *The Delicatessen Husband* and Lee Wilson Dodd's *Pegeen and the Potamus*. The series includes Day's work on his book *Scenes from the Mesozoic* and some early drawings. Some publicity for *Life With Father* is also in the series, most notably correspondence relating to Alfred A. Knopf's offer of fifty dollars for the best letter explaining why the book did not sell well in Chicago.

Arranged alphabetically by title.

b. 5, f. 61-62	<i>The Delicatessen Husband</i> , original illustrations for Florence Guy Seabury's book Includes a copy of the printed version	1926
<i>Life with Father</i>		
b. 6, f. 63-65	Third-party letters to Alfred A. Knopf in response to his offer of \$50 for the best letter on the reason why Day's <i>Life with Father</i> did not sell well in Chicago	1936
b. 6, f. 66	Clipping about <i>Life With Father</i> and typescript memoir (possibly by Alfred A. Knopf) about publishing the book	1948, 1980
b. 6, f. 67	"Noble Boys," printed version, <i>The Saturday Review</i>	1936 November 14
b. 6, f. 68	<i>Pegeen and the Potamus</i> , original pen and ink drawing by Clarence Day for Lee Wilson Dodd's book	1925
b. 6, f. 69	"To Phoebe," typescript and autograph manuscript of poem Includes a letter about the poem from George Parmly Day (1946)	1909, 1946
b. 6, f. 70-71	<i>Scenes from the Mesozoic</i> , typescript, illustrations, original pencil sketches, production file, memos, proofs, and notes	1934-1935
b. 6, f. 72	Early pen and ink sketch by Clarence Day Includes letter of authentication from George Parmly Day (1947)	1891, 1947
	Drawings signed and mounted, 10 pencil drawings and 4 ink drawings Stored in: Oversize box 9	undated



**Series III: Personal Papers, 1895-1960***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

The series contains material relating to Clarence Day's affiliation with Yale University as both a student and an alumnus.

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	Scrapbook of Yale College and New Haven memorabilia Stored in: Oversize box 8	1895-1897
b. 6, f. 73	Class of 1896 Includes printed circulars, menus, postal cards, etc. regarding reunion of the Class of 1896, Yale College	1909-1960

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**Series IV: Printed Material, 1924-1936***3 Folders*

The series consists of printed material either by or about Clarence Day. A selection of Day's poetry, short stories, and essays, published between 1924 and 1936 are represented here.

b. 6, f. 74	Clippings of writings by Clarence Day "In Woodlawn" (1926), "Life with Mother" (1936), "Father has a Bad Night" (1933), "Father Thumps on the Floor," "Father Feels Starved," "Father Hires a Cook," "Father and the Crusader's Third Wife," "Father is Firm with his Ailments," "Shorten Kiss," and "Father Lets in the Telephone" (1933)	1924-1936
b. 6, f. 75	Clippings about Clarence Day	undated
b. 6, f. 76	Pamphlets	undated

**Oversize**

*0.5 linear feet (2 boxes)*

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b. 7, f. 77-79	Scrapbook of Yale College and New Haven memorabilia	1895-1897
b. 8, f. 80	Drawings signed and mounted	undated

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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**

American literature -- 20th Century

### **Names**

Day, Clarence, 1874-1935

Whitehouse, Vira Boarman, 1875-1957

### **Corporate Body**

Alfred A. Knopf, Inc