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# Guide to the Cyril Clemens Papers

YCAL MSS 5



by Karen V. Peltier

March 1987

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New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
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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 5

**CREATOR:** Clemens, Cyril, 1902-1999

**TITLE:** Cyril Clemens papers

**DATES:** 1864-1979 (inclusive)

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers contain writings, correspondence, and printed materials about Mark Twain.

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

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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.clemens>.

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

Gift of Cyril Clemens, 1969-82.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Cyril Clemens Papers are 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

Cyril Clemens Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Associated Materials

The Beinecke Library also owns a collection of pamphlets by and about Cyril Clemens and books donated and annotated by Clemens. These materials are catalogued separately.

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## CYRIL CONISTON CLEMENS (1902-)

Cyril Coniston Clemens, son of James Ross and Katherine Boland Clemens and cousin of Mark Twain, was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 14, 1902. After attending Canterbury School in New Milford, Connecticut, he continued his education at St. Louis University High School and received his A.B. and M.A. degrees from Washington University (St. Louis). He married Nan B. Shallcross on October 8, 1933. [Selby, P. O. *116 Short Biographies of Persons Associated with Mark Twain*, 1970, p.4.]

Clemens founded the International Mark Twain Society in 1930 and edited the *Mark Twain Quarterly*, which later became the *Mark Twain Journal*, from 1936-82. His most popular biography, *My Cousin Mark Twain*, was published in 1939, followed by *The Man from Missouri: A Biography of Harry S. Truman* in 1945. He also wrote a number of short biographies which were published by the International Mark Twain Society, 1932-70, including sketches of Thomas Hardy, A. E. Housman, George Santayana, and Lytton Strachey.

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## Scope and Contents

The Cyril Clemens Papers contain writings, photocopies of correspondence, and printed papers about Mark Twain. While the papers span the dates 1864-1979, the bulk of the material covers the years 1927-79.

The papers begin with twelve folders of Clemens's [Writings](#), including the corrected page proof of his most popular title, *My Cousin Mark Twain*; corrected galleys for two numbers of the International Mark Twain Society's biographical series; and the manuscripts of a review and two articles published in the *Overland Monthly*.

The [rest of the papers](#) are arranged by subject and begin with photocopies of family correspondence and printed papers. These include a May 1864 letter from Orion Clemens, Mark Twain's brother, to T. S. Parvin; and a joint letter from Mark Twain and his wife to Miss Boland, who was to become Cyril Clemens's mother, upon her engagement to James Ross Clemens in 1899. The family printed papers contain biographical information about Clemens.

As president of the International Mark Twain Society, Clemens wrote to many well-known public figures, including Sigmund Freud, Ernest Hemingway, Ogden Nash, Richard M. Nixon, Mohamed Anwar El Sadat, George Bernard Shaw, and William Howard Taft, informing them that they had been elected Knights of Mark Twain by the Society. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jimmy Carter, and Robert Frost also received the Mark Twain Medal. Copies of their letters of acceptance and an inscription by Ezra Pound are arranged alphabetically and are followed by printed papers generated by the Society, such as brochures, bookplates, and tear sheets from the *Mark Twain Journal*.

Clemens also asked famous friends and acquaintances to send him their remembrances of Mark Twain. The last folder contains copies of tributes from Thomas Edison, Lyndon Johnson, Helen Keller, Benito Mussolini, Eugene O'Neill, and Alice B. Toklas; magazine excerpts; and a typescript by P. O. Selby on "The Langdon-Clemens Grave Plot."

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## Collection Contents

### Writings

#### BOOKS

b. 1, f. 1	<i>The Man from Missouri: Harry S. Truman</i> : printed half-title	[1945]
b. 1, f. 2	<i>Mark Twain and Harry S. Truman</i> : corrected galley proofs	[1950]
b. 1, f. 3	<i>Mark Twain and Lyndon B. Johnson</i> : corrected galley proofs	1965
b. 1, f. 4	<i>Mark Twain for Young People</i> : publication agreement	1953
b. 1, f. 5	<i>Mark Twain's Jest Book</i> : copyright certificate	1957
b. 1, f. 6-7	<i>My Cousin Mark Twain</i> : corrected page proofs	1939

#### SHORTER WORKS

b. 1, f. 8	"A Chat with Joseph Conrad": <i>Conradiana</i>	1969-70
	"Mark Twain: [1835-1910]" <a href="#">See: folder 12</a>	
b. 1, f. 9	[Review of] <i>The Ordeal of Mark Twain</i> by Van Wyck Brooks	1927 Mar 4
b. 1, f. 10	"Some Unpublished Letters by Mark Twain": <i>Overland Monthly</i>	[1929]
b. 1, f. 11	"Stephen Vincent Benét, 1898-1943"	[ca. 1944]
b. 1, f. 12	"A Visit to Mark Twain's Country": <i>Overland Monthly</i> Also contains: "Mark Twain: [1835- 1910]": <i>Overland Monthly</i>	[1929]

**Other Papers**

	Family	
b. 1, f. 13	Correspondence	1864-1930
b. 1, f. 14	Printed papers	1913-78
	International Mark Twain Society	
b. 1, f. 15	Correspondence	1927-79
b. 1, f. 16	Printed papers	n.d.
	Mark Twain	
b. 1, f. 17	Correspondence about	1927-77

## **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**

Biographers  
Biography

### **Occupations**

Authors

### **Names**

Clemens, Cyril, 1902-1999  
Twain, Mark, 1835-1910

### **Corporate Body**

International Mark Twain Society