

Guide to the Laurent Clerc Papers

MS 140



compiled by Françoise Rosset and Susan Grigg

May 1979

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 140

CREATOR: Clerc, Laurent, 1785-1869

TITLE: Laurent Clerc papers

DATES: 1811-1896

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence relating to the founding of the American School for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817 by Laurent Clerc at the invitation of Thomas H. Gallaudet. Included also is a diary in English kept by Clerc during his voyage to the United States from France (1816) together with transcriptions of newspaper accounts of his first address in the United States, newspaper clippings, legal and financial documents, student papers, and memorabilia. There are a few family and personal papers and autobiographical notes by Clerc (1857-1869). Principal correspondents are John Louis Cheverus, Thomas H. Gallaudet, Abbé Sicard, and Roberts Vaux.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Guy B. Holt, 1962.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Laurent Clerc Papers (MS 140). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

Selected correspondence and other writings from the Laurent Clerc Papers are available on microfilm (405 frames on 1 reel, 35mm.) from Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, at cost. Order no. HM77. This film also includes selected items from the Silliman Family Papers (MS 450) and eighty-three items from the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Biographical / Historical

Laurent Clerc became deaf at the age of one year. He was educated at the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Paris, where he became a teacher in 1805. In 1816 he joined Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet in founding the American School for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut, where he taught until 1858.

Scope and Contents

The papers consist of correspondence relating to the founding of the American School for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817 by Laurent Clerc at the invitation of Thomas H. Gallaudet. Included also is a diary in English kept by Clerc during his voyage to the United States from France (1816) together with transcriptions of newspaper accounts of his first address in the United States, newspaper clippings, legal and financial documents, student papers, and memorabilia. There are a few family and personal papers and autobiographical notes by Clerc (1857-1869). Principal correspondents are John Louis Cheverus, Thomas H. Gallaudet, Abbé Sicard, and Roberts Vaux.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two chronological sequences, the first consisting of correspondence and the second of all other material.

Collection Contents

Correspondence

| | | |
|------------|---|----------------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | [Abbé Ambroise Sicard to [_____]? English | [1804 August 18?] |
| b. 1, f. 1 | Laurent Clerc to his parents | [1805 August 11?] |
| b. 1, f. 1 | [_____] Gard to Laurent Clerc English | 1811 May 14 |
| b. 1, f. 1 | Laurine Duler to Laurent Clerc | 1812 February 3 |
| b. 1, f. 1 | Laurent Clerc to Abbé Sicard [draft of pupil's address to Sicard] | 1812 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | [Laurent Clerc] to [_____] English | 1813 February 3 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Laurent Clerc to [_____] Langlois | 1815 November 9 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc (2 items) | 1816 January 25 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Laurent Clerc's Communion Class to their teacher | 1816 February 3 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Laurent Clerc (for the Instructors) to the Administrators | 1816 May 10 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Laurent Clerc to the Administrators | [ca, 1816 May 10] |
| b. 1, f. 3 | (Mrs.) Gouin to [Laurent Clerc?] English | 1816 June 12 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Abbé Sicard to Bishop John Cheverus (2 items) | 1816 June 16 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Bishop John Cheverus to Laurent Clerc | 1816 September 18 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Bishop John Cheverus to Enoch Fenwick | 1816 September 30 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Bishop John Cheverus to W. Matthews | 1816 September 30 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | H.Bleecher to John Randolph | 1816 November 14 |
| b. 1, f. 4 | [Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc?] English | [1816?] |
| b. 1, f. 4 | Laurent Clerc to Abbé Sicard Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc (2 items) | [1816?] |
| b. 1, f. 4 | J. Robertson to Laurent Clerc | [1816?] |
| b. 1, f. 5 | [Joseph] J. Corre to Laurent Clerc? English | 1817 February 18 |

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|-------------|---|------------------------------|
| b. 1, f. 5 | Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc | 1817 October 26 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | [_____] to [_____] Massieu English | 1818 September 13 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | [N. Crocker?] to Laurent Clerc English | 1819 March 12 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Eliza C. (Mrs. Laurent) Clerc to Laurent Clerc | 1819 October 2 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Alice Cogswell to Laurent Clerc | 1819 October 2 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | [[_____] Bessefines?] to Laurent Clerc English | 1820 June 20 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Caroline Chester to Laurent Clerc | 1820 August 26 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Laurent Clerc to Benjamin Prescott | [1820 December 18?] |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Roberts Vaux to Laurent Clerc | 1822 April 16 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Laurent Clerc to Roberts Vaux | 1822 April 22 |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Laurent Clerc to John C. Spencer | 1827 February 18 |
| b. 1, f. 7 | [[_____] Cassolis?] to Laurent Clerc English | [1833 September 19?] |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Laurent Clerc to F.A.P. Barnard | 1835 January 26 |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Francis J. (Francois) Clerc to his mother, Eliza C. (Mrs. Laurent) Clerc | 1836 March 13 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | John Carlin to [_____] Allabough | 1885 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | E. Booth to Francis J. Clerc (2 items) | 1886 February 23, March 8 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | Francis J. Clerc to Dr. [_____] Peet | 1890 January 6 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | [Job Turner?] to Francis J. Clerc English | 1895 December 18 |
| b. 1, f. 9 | Excerpt from <i>Journal de Paris</i> re the Comet | 1811 November 15 |
| b. 1, f. 9 | [Massieu's?] commendation of Institute Alumni English | [1812?] |
| b. 1, f. 9 | Abbé Sicard on discipline | [1812-1815?] |
| b. 1, f. 9 | Petition to the Emperor, on behalf of deaf-mutes and Abbé Sicard | [1812-1815?] |
| b. 1, f. 9 | A joke on Laurent Clerc | [1812-1815?] |
| b. 1, f. 10 | Program of lectures by Abbé Sicard on deaf-mutes, in London (with notes from lecture sessions) | 1815 June 16 |
| b. 1, f. 10 | List of dinner guests | [1815 June-Jul?] |

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|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| b. 1, f. 10 | Certificate of departure from England for Laurent Clerc | 1815 July 29 |
| b. 1, f. 10 | [Laurent Clerc's copy of a letter from Abbé Sicard to a friend, re post-Waterloo political situation?] English | [1815-1816?] |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Contract between Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, appointing Clerc as instructor in Gallaudet's proposed Hartford institute for the deaf and dumb | 1816 June 13 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Lists of pupils of Laurent Clerc | 1817-1819 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Letter of commendation of Laurent Clerc by French envoy to the United States | 1819 March 2 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Contract renewing Laurent Clerc's appointment at Hartford American Asylum | 1820 April 25 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Transcript of conversation between Abbé Sicard and [_____] | 1820 |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Copy of court record granting Laurent Clerc residency rights in Connecticut | 1827 January |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Laurent Clerc's passport | 1835 April 8 |
| b. 1, f. 12 | "Hints to Teachers of the Deaf and Dumb" English | [1851] |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Will of Marie Clerc, Laurent Clerc's sister | 1856 April 18 |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Petition of deaf-mute alumni for a pension for Laurent Clerc | 1856 September 4 |
| b. 1, f. 13 | Autobiographical notes by Laurent Clerc, with photograph | [1857-1869?] |
| b. 1, f. 13 | Notes prepared [by Francis J. Clerc] "for use, at the Centennial of Clerc's birth, in Philadelphia, but not used" | 1885 |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Petition of deaf-mute artist A. Aubert to, Minister of State, for a grant to travel to Rome | undated |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Report by Laurent Clerc to Minister of State, on teaching of deaf-mutes | undated |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Notes on teaching of deaf-mutes [by Laurent Clerc?] | undated |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Note on teaching of Bible | undated |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Fragment of personal agenda | undated |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Card of Laffitte, Gaillard & Cie (Stagecoaches and trains) | undated |
| Newspaper clippings and announcements | | |
| b. 1, f. 15 | [Burlington]: visit of Thomas Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc English | 1816 December 16 |
| b. 1, f. 15 | [New York and Boston <i>Youth's Cabinet</i>]: "American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb of Hartford, Ct." English | 1840 September 10 |
| b. 1, f. 15 | [<i>Hartford Daily Courant</i>]: "Great Meeting of Deaf-Mutes" English | 1850 September 28 |

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|-------------|---|---------------------------|
| b. 1, f. 15 | [St. Louis]: "Distinguished Arrival" [of Laurent Clerc on a visit to St. Louis] English | undated |
| b. 1, f. 15 | [_____]: "L'Epee, Teacher of the Deaf and Dumb" English | undated |
| b. 1, f. 16 | Excerpts copied by Laurent Clerc from newspaper articles on his work and "addresses" A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy. | 1816 |
| b. 1, f. 17 | Laurent Clerc's diary of trip to America (2 copies) A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy. | 1816 June 18- August 8 |
| b. 1, f. 18 | Francis J. Clerc: partial listing of the Laurent Clerc Papers A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy. | 1874, 1896 |

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

Deaf -- Education and institutions
Education
Educators
French -- United States
Shipping

Geographic Names

Europe

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Names

Cheverus, Jean-Louis-Anne-Madeleine
Lefebvre de, 1768-1836
Clerc, Laurent, 1785-1869
Gallaudet, T. H. (Thomas Hopkins), 1787-1851
Sicard, Roch Ambroise, 1742-1822
Vaux, Roberts, 1786-1836

Corporate Body

American School, at Hartford, for the Deaf