

Table of Contents

- [Collection Summary](#)
- [Biographical Note](#)
- [Scope and Content Note](#)
- [Subject Headings](#)
- [Administrative Information](#)
- [Access and Use](#)
- [Encoding Information](#)
- [Container List](#)

Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Barnum, Charlotte Cynthia, 1860-1934

Creator: Barnum, Clara Louisa, 1866-1953

Title: Charlotte and Clara Barnum Papers

Inclusive Dates: circa 1870-2001

Bulk Dates: 1877-1951

Quantity: 1.1 cubic feet (4 boxes)

Abstract: The collection contains correspondence, ephemera, and photographs, mostly relating to Charlotte and Clara Barnum's education and continued association with Vassar College. Also included are materials related to Clarine Warner Curtis (VC 1888), a life-long friend and correspondent of Clara Barnum, whose daughter, Virginia H. Curtis Milburn Robertson (VC 1930), continued correspondence with Clara after Clarine's death in 1945.

[Top](#)

Biographical Note

Born to lexicographer Samuel Weed Barnum (1820-1891) and his wife, Charlotte Betts Barnum (1823-1899), Charlotte Cynthia Barnum (1860-1934) grew up in New Haven, Connecticut, and graduated from Vassar College in 1881. In 1895, she became one of the first three women to receive a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Yale University. She worked as an editor, an actuary, and a professor of astronomy and mathematics.

Clara Louisa Barnum (1866-1953) followed her older sister to Vassar and graduated in 1888. After leaving Vassar, she received her Master's in Education from Yale University and taught Latin at New Haven High School for 25 years. She assisted her father as a proofreader on the first edition of Noah Webster's dictionary, and later worked at the Yale University Library as a genealogist.

[Top](#)

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains correspondence, ephemera, and photographs, mostly relating to Charlotte and Clara Barnum's education and continued association with Vassar College. Also included are materials related to Clarine Warner Curtis (VC 1888), a life-long friend and correspondent of Clara Barnum, whose daughter, Virginia H. Curtis Milburn Robertson (VC 1930), continued correspondence with Clara after Clarine's death in 1945. Includes photographs and other material relating to the Vassar College Classes of 1881 and 1888. One letter describes Mark Twain's 1885 visit to the college.

[Top](#)

Access and Use

Access

This collection is open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#) without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

[Top](#)

Subject Headings

Names:

- Barnum, Charlotte Cynthia, 1860-1934
- Barnum, Clara L., 1866-1953
- Curtis, Clarine Warner, 1866-1945
- Robertson, Virginia H. Curtis Milburn, 1908-

Organizations:

- Vassar College--Students
- Vassar College. Class of 1881
- Vassar College. Class of 1888

Subjects:

- Women mathematicians
- Women's colleges--New York (State)--Poughkeepsie
- Women--Education

Document Types:

- Correspondence
- Ephemera
- Financial records
- Photographs

VCL Categories:

- Family
- Vassar College
- Women's History

[Top](#)

Encoding Information

Encoded by Laura Streett and Elizabeth Clarke, November 2006. Updated February 2009. Updated by Emma Gronbeck, June 2023.

[Top](#)

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Charlotte and Clara Barnum Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Processed by Laura Streett, April 2005. Additions processed and integrated by Emma Gronbeck, June 2023.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Charlotte Barnum (granddaughter of Samuel Horace Barnum, Clara and Charlotte's brother), 2005-2021. [M2005-007, M2009-002, M2016-009, M2019-030, M2020-002, M2021-005]

Other Formats

An electronic version of the correspondence transcripts is available. See the Archives and Special Collections staff for more details.

[Top](#)

Container List

Correspondence

- 1.01 Barnum, Charlotte C. to family, 1879-1889 [originals and transcripts]
- 1.02 Barnum, Clara L. to family and friends, 1884-1885 [originals]
- 1.03 Barnum, Clara L. to family and friends, 1886 [originals]
- 1.04 Barnum, Clara L. to family and friends, 1887 [originals]
- 1.05 Barnum, Clara L. to family and friends, 1888 [originals]
- 1.06 Barnum, Clara L. to family and friends, 1884-1888 [transcripts]
- 1.07 Barnum, Clara L. to others, 1913, 1945
- 1.08 Barnum, Clara L. to the VC Class of 1888, 1936
- 1.09 To Barnum, Clara L. from others, 1940-1946
- 1.10 Curtis, Clarine Warner to Clara L. Barnum, 1880-1886
- 1.11 Curtis, Clarine Warner to Clara L. Barnum, 1889-1909
- 1.12 Curtis, Clarine Warner to Clara L. Barnum, 1930-1939, undated
- 1.13 Curtis, Clarine Warner to others, 1936-1945
- 1.14 To Curtis, Clarine Warner from others, 1945-1948
- 1.15 Raymond, John H. to Samuel W. Barnum, 1876-1877
- 1.16 Robertson, Virginia H. Curtis to Clara L. Barnum, 1939-1952
- 1.17 Robertson, Virginia H. Curtis to Harriette P. Marsh, 1947

Personal Papers and Ephemera

- 1.18 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Biographical information, 2001, undated
- 1.19 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Letter of recommendation from Maria Mitchell, 1883 Jul 4
- 1.20 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Letters of recommendation, certification, and appointment, 1883-1923
- 1.21 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Nantucket Maria Mitchell Association membership certificate, 1902
- 1.22 Barnum, Charlotte C. - U.S. Civil Service Commission exam scores, 1899-1918
- 1.23 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Vassar College ephemera, circa 1878-1881
- 1.24 Barnum, Charlotte C. - Vassar College receipts and invoices, 1877-1880
- 1.25 Barnum, Clara L. - Biographical information, 2001
- 1.26 Barnum, Clara L. - Vassar College badge, Class of 1888, undated
- 2.01 Barnum, Clara L. - Vassar College ephemera, 1884-1899
- 4.01 Barnum, Clara L. - Vassar College ephemera, 1884-1887
- 2.02 Barnum, Clara L. - Vassar College tuition receipts and invoices, 1884-1887
- 2.03 Belmont School ephemera, circa 1940
- 2.04 Clippings, 1919, 1934
- 2.05 Curtis, Clarine Warner - Biographical information, undated
- 2.06 Curtis, Clarine Warner - Obituary, 1945 Jul 29
- 2.07 Curtis, Virginia Hubbard - Obituary, 1918
- 2.08 Vassar College ephemera, undated

Photographs

- 2.09 Barnum, Charlotte C., 1881-1891
- 2.10 Barnum, Charlotte C., 1902-1917
- 2.11 Barnum, Charlotte C., undated
- 2.12 Barnum, Clara L., circa 1870-1896
- 2.13 Barnum, Clara L., 1951, undated
- 2.14 Barnum, Clara L. and the Vassar College Class of 1888, 1922-1938
- 2.15 Curtis, Clarine Warner, 1913-1935, undated
- 2.16 Curtis, Clarine Warner and Virginia H. Curtis, 1910-1912
- 2.17 Curtis, Virginia Hubbard (1831-1918), 1925, undated
- 2.18 Milburn, Elizabeth and Joseph (Virginia Robertson's children), 1935-1943
- 2.19 Robertson, Virginia H. Curtis Milburn and family, 1908-1942
- 2.20 Vassar College campus, circa 1880-1890
- 4.02 Vassar College Class of 1888, 1888
- 2.21-2.22 Vassar College faculty, circa 1881-1888
- 3.01-3.02 Vassar College students, 1880-1895
- 3.03 Vassar College students (unidentified), circa 1880-1888
- 3.04 Warner family, 1923, undated

3.05 Unidentified students (The Notman Photographic Co., Albany, NY), circa 1880-1888

[Return to the Table of Contents](#)