Guide to the Laura C. Holloway Letters,
BCMS.0020

Finding aid prepared by Joy Holland, Manager of Special Collections
Revised by Diana Bowers-Smith, Archivist

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists’ Toolkit
September 27, 2018
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## Summary Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repository</th>
<th>Brooklyn Public Library - Brooklyn Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Laura C. Holloway Letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>1868-1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>0.44 Linear feet, 1 box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Brooklyn Collection Annex, Shelf 4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>A collection of letters addressed to turn-of-the-century author and journalist Mrs. Laura C. Holloway.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Preferred Citation

This collection should be cited as the Laura C. Holloway Letters, Brooklyn Public Library – Brooklyn Collection.
Biographical Note

Laura Carter Holloway, also known as Laura Holloway-Langford, was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1843, one of the fourteen children of Samuel Carter, hotel keeper, and Ann Vaulx Carter. She was educated at the Nashville Female Academy, and married Lieutenant Junius Brutus Holloway of the Union Army in 1862. They had a son, George Holloway, that same year, but the marriage was not a happy one and the pair quickly separated.

At the end of the war Sam Carter moved his family to New York, where Laura began a career as an author and journalist. She published her first book, *The Ladies of the White House*, in 1870, and its sales made her independently wealthy. That year she also became the literary and women’s page editor at the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* newspaper. Alongside her journalism, she continued to write books, among them *The Hearthstone or Life at Home, a Household Manual* (1883), *The Mothers of Great Men and Women…*(1883), *Chinese Gordon, the Uncrowned King* (1885), *Five Years of Theosophy* (1885), *The Buddhist Diet-Book* (1886), *The Woman’s Story* (1888), and *Atma Fairy Stories* (1903).

Holloway’s interests included theosophy, the Shakers, phrenology, the occult, vegetarianism and social reform. She is also considered an important force in the dissemination of ideas on Eastern religions. In 1884 she met Helena Blavatsky, leader of the theosophist movement, and worked with the theosophists for about six months. She was also a leader of Brooklyn’s Seidl Society, the aim of which was to sponsor concerts at Brighton Beach to be available at low cost to working class women. Through this activity she came into contact with Susan B. Anthony, as well as her future husband, Edward L. Langford, whom she married in 1890.

Colonel Edward Langford was deputy police commissioner of Brooklyn, and later an officer of the Brooklyn & Brighton Beach Railroad that ran from Prospect Park to the Brighton Beach Hotel. He was also active in the affairs of the Seidl Society. Colonel Langford died in 1902.

After his death, and through her friendship with Eldress Anna White, Holloway became more involved with the Shakers, and in 1906 she put down a deposit on a farm in New Lebanon, Columbia County, NY. Her son George retired from the army in 1911 and came to Upper Canaan to manage the farm, but on his sudden death from heart disease in 1914, Holloway entered a period of financial difficulties and depression. The last years of her life were marred by poverty and struggles over the manuscript of a book she had written about Madame Blavatsky. Laura C. Holloway died in 1930.

Scope and Contents

The Laura C. Holloway Letters comprise 70 items spanning the years 1869 – 1926, almost all handwritten letters. Seventeen of the letters relate to Holloway’s book, *The Ladies of the White House*. In addition
there are five letters from poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox, four from *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* President Herbert F. Gunnison and one from abolitionist and author Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Most notably, there are ten letters written between 1881–1889 to Mrs. Holloway from Susan B. Anthony, who joined the Women’s Rights Movement in 1852 and dedicated her life to woman’s suffrage. Correspondence from Susan B. Anthony was primarily in reference to the planning for the 40th Anniversary Council of the First National Women’s Suffrage Convention, at which Mrs. Holloway was expected to present a paper on Women in Journalism.

Also notable in the collection are a letter from William Howard Taft, president 1909–1913, and notes from Andrew Johnson, president 1865-1869. In addition, this collection includes copies of three of Holloway’s books: *Adelaide Neilson*, *An Hour with Charlotte Bronte*, and *The Ladies of the White House*.

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**Arrangement**

The collection is arranged in seven folders. Folders 1-4 contain correspondence from specific senders. The folders are arranged alphabetically by surname and their contents are arranged chronologically. Folder 5 contains correspondence related to Holloway’s book, *The Ladies of the White House*, and is arranged chronologically. Folder 6 contains mixed correspondence and is arranged by sender’s surname. Folder 7 contains non-correspondence material and has no arrangement. There are also three books by Holloway included with the collection, listed alphabetically by title at the end of the folder listing.

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**Administrative Information**

**Publication Information**

Brooklyn Public Library - Brooklyn Collection, 2012; revised in 2018

**Access**

Collection is located in the Brooklyn Collection at the Central Branch at Grand Army Plaza. The collection may only be used in the library and is not available through interlibrary loan. Requests to view the collection must be made at least 48 hours in advance of visit.

**Use**
While many items in the Brooklyn Collection are unrestricted, we do not own reproduction rights to all materials. Be aware of the several kinds of rights that might apply: copyright, licensing and trademarks. The researcher assumes all responsibility for copyright questions.

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Related Materials

Brooklyn Collection clippings files: Holloway, Laura C.


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Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

Personal Name(s)

- Anthony, Susan B. (Susan Brownell), 1820-1906
- Gunnison, Herbert F. (Herbert Foster), 1858-1932
- Holloway, Laura C. (Laura Carter), 1848-1930
- Wilcox, Ella Wheeler, 1850-1919

Subject(s)

- Women--Suffrage--United States
**Collection Inventory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder 1: Susan B. Anthony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1</strong> December 1, 1881. Tenafly, NJ. Suggests LCH should edit a newspaper; invites her speak at the Woman Suffrage Convention in 1882.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2</strong> March 17, 1887. Rochester, NY. Vol III of the History of Woman Suffrage is being sent to LCH for review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3</strong> June 28, 1887. Rochester, NY. Hopes LCH will be in Washington for 40th Anniversary celebration of the Woman Suffrage Movement. Will LCH give a paper on women in journalism?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4</strong> February 5, 1888. Again asks LCH to give paper on women in journalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.5</strong> February 10, 1888. Riggs House, Washington D.C. Is glad LCH has agreed and will put her in program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.7</strong> April 18, 1888. Riggs House, Washington D.C. More on the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.8</strong> July 7, 1889. Rochester, NY. Must refuse an invitation from LCH for July 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.9</strong> July 10, 1889. Rochester, NY. Regretting her refusal to attend the Seidl Society meeting on July 12, and offers to come at a later date.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.10 July 11, 1889. Rochester, NY. On SBA’s suggestion LCH has asked Elizabeth Cady Stanton to the Seidl Society meeting on Jul 12; SBA very happy that she has accepted.

1.11 August 13, 1889. Saratoga Springs, NY. SBA offers to come to Brighton Beach on Aug 22 or 23. Includes a note from LCH’s son George, who has redirected the letter to his mother in Mansfield.

1.12 Undated. Newspaper article, possibly by LCH, giving an account of SBA’s first speech at a teachers’ convention.

Folder 2: Harriet Beecher Stowe

2.1 March 22, 1888. Hartford, CT. Briefly explains her religious beliefs.

2.2 Undated. Signed cabinet card, portrait of Harriet Beecher Stowe, by Geo. H. Hastings, photographer, 147 Tremont St, Boston, MA.

Folder 3: Herbert F. Gunnison

3.1 October 14, 1921. Brooklyn, NY. Invites LCH to 80th anniversary celebration of Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

3.2 January 10, 1923. Brooklyn, NY.

3.3 October 16, 1926. Brooklyn, NY. Acknowledges receipt of article.

3.4 Undated. Sends an article copied from the files in the Brooklyn Public Library.
Folder 4: Ella Wheeler Wilcox

4.1 November 3, 1880. Meriden, CT.

4.2 May 6, 1887. N. Britain, CT.

4.3 July 23, 1887. Shelter Island Heights.

4.4 July 28, 1887. Shelter Island Heights.

Folder 5: The Ladies of the White House

5.1 October 13, 1868. United States Senate Chamber, Washington, D.C. From Martha Patterson, daughter of President Andrew Johnson.

5.2 February 20, 1869. Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C. From Martha Patterson.


5.4 April 16, 1869. Cleves, OH. From Thos. Archer, postmaster, Post Office at North Bend.

5.5 April 23, 1869. Cleves, OH. From Mrs. Bettie H. Eaton, granddaughter of President William Henry Harrison, and sister of President Benjamin Harrison.

5.6 May 12, 1869. Thurlow. From V.J. Trist.
5.7 May 22, 1869. Point Farm near North Bend, OH. From J. Scott Harrison, son of President Harrison.

5.8 July 9, 1869. North Bend, OH. From Bettie H. Eaton.

5.9 July 24, 1871. North Bend, OH. From Bettie H. Eaton.

5.10 June 23, 1872. North Bend, OH. From Bettie H. Eaton.

5.11 April 15, 1881. North Bend, OH. From Bettie H. Eaton.

5.12 May 4, 1885. Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C. From Daniel S. Lamont[?], Private Secretary.

5.13 December 29, 1885. Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C. From Rose Elizabeth Cleveland (sister of President Grover Cleveland).

5.14 June 14, 1886. Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C. From D. S. Lamont.

5.15 June 25, 1886. Richmond, VA. From Mrs. (President) Tyler.

5.16 August 11, 1886. Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C. From Frances Cleveland, wife of President Grover Cleveland.


Folder 6: Other Correspondents

6.1 Beecher, Mrs. Henry Ward. Undated. 71 Orange St, Brooklyn, NY.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Bok, Edward W.</td>
<td>October 1, 1886</td>
<td>The Brooklyn Magazine, 7 Murray St, New York.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Chandler, Louise C.</td>
<td>November 30, [no year]</td>
<td>28 Rutland Square, Boston, MA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Damrosch, Walter</td>
<td>January 10, 1888</td>
<td>Office of the Assistant Director, Metropolitan Opera House, 7th Ave &amp; 39th St, NY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Ellis, Havelock</td>
<td>14 Dover Mansions,</td>
<td>Canterbury Rd, Brixton, London S.W. 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Howard, Oliver O.</td>
<td>December 21, 1885</td>
<td>Headquarters Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>McDonald, W.J.</td>
<td>September 19, 1868</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. Copy of a letter addressed to the President.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Moulton, Louise C.</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Summerville, SC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>Preston, Margaret J.</td>
<td>February 29, 1892</td>
<td>Lexington, VA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>Preston, Margaret J.</td>
<td>July 14, [no year]</td>
<td>Lexington, VA. Letter addressed to Miss Cleveland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>Proctor, Edna Dean.</td>
<td>October 18, 1920</td>
<td>Framingham, MA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>Serviss, Garrett P.</td>
<td>January 11, 1892</td>
<td>Private Observatory of Garrett P. Serviss, No. 8 Middagh St, Brooklyn, NY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>Seward, F.W.</td>
<td>May 22, 1877</td>
<td>Dept. of State, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>Taft, William J.</td>
<td>March 27, 1922</td>
<td>Supreme Court of the United States, Washington D.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.16 Willard, Frances E. September 29, 1888. Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Evanston, IL.

6.17 Wurster, F.W. May 7, 1897. Mayor’s Office, Brooklyn, NY.

6.18 Unknown correspondent. Envelope addressed to Mrs. Laura C. Holloway, from Holland Patent, NY.

Folder 7: Non-Correspondence Materials

7.1 The Tennessee Almanac, 1865.


7.3 Publicity leaflet for new “bridal” edition of The Ladies of the White House.

7.4 Invitation to 80th birthday celebration, Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1921.

7.5 Article, Oct 26, 1926, Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

7.6 Petition to allow working children of Brooklyn two paid holidays at sea shore [potentially Seidl Society business of the 1880s].

7.7 Photocopy of autograph of Matthew Arnold.

7.8 Two notes and an autograph by Andrew Johnson.
**Books by Laura C. Holloway**


*An Hour with Charlotte Bronte, or, Flowers from a Yorkshire Moor.* Philadelphia: J.W. Bradley, 1882. Inscribed by the author to “Mr. McKelway.”

*The Ladies of the White House; or, in the Home of the Presidents.* Philadelphia: Bradley & Company, 1884.