

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Clara Barrus Papers
1906-1931
MssCol 3927

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March 2005

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Summary

- Main entry:** Barrus, Clara
- Title:** Clara Barrus Papers, 1906-1931
- Size:** .3 linear feet (1 box)
- Source:** Gift of Mrs. Frank J. Sprague, 1947, 1950
- Abstract:** Clara Barrus (1864-1931) was a physician and long-time companion and biographer of naturalist John Burroughs. Her papers consist of incoming correspondence, 1906-1931, primarily from her friends Elizabeth Dowden and Charles Fletcher Lummis, her notes on a trip to Italy in 1929, and a few of her poems.
- Access:** Apply in the Special Collections Office for admission to the Manuscripts and Archives Division.
- Preferred citation:** Clara Barrus Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.
- Alternate formats:** Letters of Elizabeth Dowden to Barrus available on microfilm, *ZL-253

Biographical note

Clara Barrus (1864-1931) was a physician and author best known as the official biographer of the prominent American naturalist writer, John Burroughs (1837-1921). Barrus was born in Port Byron, New York and received an M.D. in 1888 from Boston University. During her medical career she practiced privately in Utica, New York, served on the staff of the Middletown State Homeopathic Hospital for the Insane, and as professor of psychiatry at the Woman's Medical College of New York City.

Barrus met John Burroughs in 1902 and became his devoted follower, interviewer, and frequent companion. She published several essays on Burroughs during his lifetime and, after his death, was named his literary executrix and official biographer. She devoted most of her remaining years to Burroughs' memory, editing his posthumous works and journals and publishing the two-volume *Life and Letters of John Burroughs* in 1928 and *Whitman and Burroughs, Comrades* in 1931.

Scope and content note

The Barrus papers consist chiefly of letters she received, 1906-1931, from friends Clara Dowden and Charles Fletcher Lummis. The remainder of the papers include some additional letters, poems by Barrus, and her notes on a trip to Italy in 1929.

The letters from Elizabeth Dowden of Dublin, Ireland, 1913-1931, relate to personal and literary matters, especially the writings of her husband, Edward Dowden, Irish editor and critic, and to John Burroughs and include references to Walt Whitman, World War I, and Irish nationalism. The letters from Charles Fletcher Lummis concern his health and activities after his retirement from a career as a preservationist and promoter of the Southwest. There are also a small number of letters from Walter S. Crump, Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, Richard Watson Gilder, and others. There are only two copies of letters by Barrus in the collection, one to R.W. Gilder praising his latest book or poetry (1907) and the other a letter of congratulation to Charles Fletcher Lummis written as her contribution to a presentation volume given to him by the Southwest Museum (1923).

Related material

Additional correspondence between Clara Barrus and Richard Watson Gilder can be found in the Richard Watson Gilder Papers and the Century Company Records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Arrangement note

The Clara Barrus Papers are organized in the following series:

- I. Correspondence, 1906-1931
- II. Notes on travel in Italy, 1929
- III. Poems, 1910 and undated

Container list**I. Correspondence, 1906-1931**

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Burroughs, Julian (?), 1925
	2	Crump, Walter Gray, 1925
	3	Dellenbaugh, Frederick S., 1921 Dowden, Elizabeth (Microfilmed)
	4	1913-1919
	5	1920-1923
	6	1924-1926
	7	1926-1931
	8	Gilder, Richard Watson, 1906-1907 Includes typed transcripts of letters from R.W. Gilder to Barrus and one from Barrus to Gilder with a copy of a her poem honoring him.
	9	Gilder, Rosamund, 1923
	10	Gould, Helen Miller, 1912, 1921
	11	Lummis, Charles F., 1922-1924, 1926 Includes Barrus's draft letter of tribute to Lummis.
	12	Rosenbach Company, 1927
	13	Trinity College, Dublin, 1929
	14	Walpole Galleries, 1923
<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	II. Notes on travel in Italy, 1929
1	15	
<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	III. Poems, 1910 and undated
1	16	