

Peter A. Demens Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2012

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm81057554>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms008065>

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Revised and expanded by Melinda K. Friend

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

Collection Summary

Title: Peter A. Demens Papers

Span Dates: 1880-2000

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1892-1919)

ID No.: MSS57554

Creator: Demens, Peter A., 1850-1919

Extent: 45 items

Extent: 5 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 3.0 linear feet

Language: Collection material in Russian with some in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm81057554>

Summary: Author, businessman, railroad promoter, and entrepreneur. Notebooks, scrapbooks, correspondence, and articles mostly relating to Demens's authorship of articles for the Russian journal *Vestnik Evropy* and Russian and American newspapers on events in America and his life.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Demens, Peter A., 1850-1919.

Korolenko, Vladimir Galaktionovich, 1853-1921--Correspondence.

Kropotkin, Petr Alekseevich, kni`a`z', 1842-1921--Correspondence.

Pobedonost`s`ev, Konstantin Petrovich, 1827-1907--Correspondence.

Slonimskii, L. Z. (Leonid Zinov'evich), 1850-1918--Correspondence.

Stasi`u`levich, M. (Mikhail), 1826-1911--Correspondence.

Suvorin, A. S. (Aleksei Sergeevich), 1834-1912--Correspondence.

Tolstoy, Leo, graf, 1828-1910--Correspondence.

Tverskoĭ, P. A., 1850-1919.

Vengerov, S. A.--Correspondence.

Subjects

American newspapers.

Dukhobors--Canada.

Jews--Russia.

Molokans--California.

Molokans--Hawaii.

Presidents--United States--Election.

Russian newspapers.

Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905.

World War, 1914-1918.

Places

California--Social life and customs.

Cuba--History.

Florida--Social life and customs.

Hawaii--Annexation to the United States.

Russia--Emigration and immigration.

Russia--History--Revolution, 1905-1907.

Saint Petersburg (Russia)--History--To 1917.

Soviet Union--History--Revolution, 1917-1921.

United States--History--1865-1921.

United States--Politics and government--1865-1933.

Titles

Vi ē stnik Evropy (Saint Petersburg, Russia)

Occupations

Authors.

Businessmen.

Entrepreneurs.

Railroad executives.

Provenance

The papers of Peter A. Demens, author, businessman, railroad promoter, and entrepreneur, were given to the Library of Congress by his daughter, Vera Demens (Mrs. Andrey) Tolstoy, in 1977. Additional items were given by William H. Parsons in 2001.

Processing History

The papers of Peter A. Demens were arranged and described in 1977. The collection was expanded and reorganized and the finding aid revised in 2012.

Additional Guides

An article by Robert V. Allen, "Peter Demens: The Redoubtable Hustler," appeared in *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 34, no. 3 (July 1977): 208-226.

Other Repositories

A scrapbook of Peter A. Demens is located in the St. Petersburg Museum of History, St. Petersburg, Florida.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Peter A. Demens is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Peter A. Demens are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Peter A. Demens Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1850, May 1	Born Pyotr Alekseyevich Demytyev in Novgorod Governorate near St. Petersburg, Russia; a nobleman
1867-1871	Served as officer in tsar's infantry guard
1871	Took ownership of the family estates in Tver' Province upon his majority
circa 1872	Married Raisa Borisenko
1881	Arrived in United States and traveled to Jacksonville, Fla.
1881-1885	Settled in Longwood, Fla., and operated lumber and contracting businesses
1886-1889	Assumed charter of Orange Belt Railway and set up with others the Orange Belt Investment Co., a rail line constructed from Sanford, Fla., to the Pinellas Peninsula, present-day St. Petersburg, Fla.; sold interest in the railroad, 1889
1889-1892	Moved to Asheville, N.C., and operated P. A. Demens Woodworking Co., a lumber and contracting business; sold business, 1892
1892-1919	Moved to Los Angeles, Calif., and operated steam laundry venture; invested in citrus groves, Alta Loma, Calif.; president of Cucamonga Citrus Fruit Growers Association
1893-1914	Contributed articles to <i>Viestnik Evropy</i> under the name P. A. Tverskoĭ
1905	Returned briefly to Russia
1919, Jan. 21	Died, Alta Loma, Calif.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Peter A. Demens (1850-1919) span the years 1880-2000, with the bulk of the material dating from 1892 to 1919. The collection consists of notebooks, scrapbooks, and an addition.

The notebooks contain drafts of Demens's articles and correspondence. Tucked inside the front covers are notes written by former Library of Congress area specialist for Russia and the Soviet Union, Robert V. Allen, listing the contents of the pages and dates of each volume. Demens's articles, written mostly for the Russian journal *Viestnik Evropy*, were signed as P. A. Tverskoĭ. Topics include American politics and presidential campaigns, annexation of Hawaii, Cuba, Dukhobors and their immigration to Canada, treatment of Jews in Russia, the Russo-Japanese War and Bloody Sunday, Molokans in California and Hawaii, World War I, the Russian revolution, and Demens's life in Florida and California. Correspondents include Vladimir Galaktionovich Korolenko, Petr Alekseevich Kropotkin, kniaz', Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev, L. Z. Slonimskĭ, M. Stasiulevich, A. S. Suvorin, Leo Tolstoy, and S. A. Vengerov. Of interest in the undated notebooks is a draft of "Ten Years in America: From My Personal Memories," a series of articles that appeared in *Viestnik Evropy* from January to May 1893.

The scrapbooks contain clippings of Demens's articles from various Russian and American newspapers and journals. The addition includes a photocopy of the scrapbook held by the St. Petersburg Museum of History, St. Petersburg, Florida, that covers a date span not represented by the other scrapbooks in the collection. The addition also contains a bibliography of works by Demens writing as P. A. Tverskoĭ and a publication from a symposium on Demens held in 2000.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Notebooks
BOX 1	1892-1896 (14 vols.)
BOX 2	1896-1900 (9 vols.)
BOX 3	1900-1905 (8 vols.)
BOX 4	1906-1909, 1916-circa 1918 (4 vols.)
BOX 4	Undated (2 vols.)
BOX 5	(2 vols.)
BOX 5	Loose page, notebook enclosures, and fragments, undated
BOX 5	Scrapbooks, 1881, 1907-1919 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 5	Addition
BOX 5	Bibliography of writings by P. A. Tverskoĭ, 1880-1912
BOX 5	Parsons, William H., editor. <i>Peter Demens: An International Symposium</i> . St. Petersburg, Fla.: Heritage Press of St. Petersburg, 2000 (2 vols.)
BOX 5	Scrapbook, photocopy, 1908, Jan. 1-Feb. 25 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX OV 1	Scrapbooks, 1881, 1907-1919 (4 vols.)
BOX OV 1	Addition
BOX OV 1	Scrapbook, photocopy, 1908, Jan. 1-Feb. 25 (Container 5)