Titus Coan Family Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2009

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

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm74076760

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009306

Prepared by Anita Nolen
Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2009
Revised 2021 April
Collection Summary

Title: Titus Coan Family Papers
Span Dates: 1806-1923
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1832-1882)
ID No.: MSS76760
Creator: Coan, Titus, 1801-1882
Extent: 5,000 items
Extent: 31 containers
Extent: 10.3 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English, with Hawaiian
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm74076760
Summary: Family and general correspondence, diaries, journals, books and writings by Coan on Hawaii, and Coan family material relating mainly to Coan's missionary work in Hawaii, Patagonia, and the Marquesas Islands.

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
Coan family.
Coan, Fidelia Church, 1810-1872.
Coan, Harriet Fidelia, 1839-1906.
Coan, Lydia Bingham.
Coan, Samuel Latimer, 1846-1887.
Coan, Titus, 1801-1882.
Du Pont, Sophie Madeleine, 1810-1888--Correspondence.
Lyman, Chester Smith, 1814-1890--Correspondence.
Oliphant, Mary--Correspondence.
Oliphant, Sarah--Correspondence.
Robinson, Maria Church.

Subjects
Missions--French Polynesia--Marquesas Islands.
Missions--Hawaii--Hilo.
Missions--Patagonia (Argentina and Chile)
Presbyterian Church--Missions.
Religion.
Volcanoes--Hawaii.

Places
Kilauea Volcano (Hawaii)

Occupations
Clergy.
Missionaries.

Provenance

The family papers of Titus Coan, Presbyterian minister and missionary, were given to the Library of Congress by the Sarah Coan Acheson in 1969.
Processing History

The collection was processed in 1975. The finding aid was revised in 2009.

Other Repositories

The New-York Historical Society, New York, N.Y., has a collection of Titus Coan papers and also of his son, Titus Munson Coan (1836-1921). Duplicate and extraneous printed matter deemed inappropriate for retention in the Library's Titus Coan Papers was transferred to the Lyman Museum, Hilo, Hawaii.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Titus Coan Family papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The Coan Family Papers 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, Titus Coan Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1801, Feb. 1</td>
<td>Born, Killingworth, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819-1826</td>
<td>Taught school in Connecticut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826-1830</td>
<td>Taught school, Riga, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>Received into Presbyterian Church, Riga, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831-1933</td>
<td>Attended Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>Licensed as a minister by Cayuga County, N.Y. Presbytery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833-1834</td>
<td>Ordained a missionary by American Board of Foreign Missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Married Fidelia Church (1810-1872)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Sailed for Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834-1882</td>
<td>Missionary, Hilo, Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Birth of son, Titus Munson Coan (died 1921)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Birth of daughter, Harriet Fidelia Coan (died 1906)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Birth of daughter, Sarah Eliza Coan (died 1916)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Birth of son, Samuel Latimer Coan (died 1887)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860 and 1867</td>
<td>Made voyages to Marquesas Islands for Hawaiian Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-1871</td>
<td>Visited the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Married Lydia Bingham (died 1915)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Published Adventures in Patagonia. New York; Dodd, Mead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Published Life in Hawaii. New York: A. D. F. Randolph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882, Dec. 1</td>
<td>Died, Hilo, Hawaii</td>
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</table>
Scope and Content Note

The papers of the Titus Coan family span the period 1806-1923, with the bulk from 1832 to 1882. Consisting mainly of correspondence between members of the families of Titus Coan and his wife, Fidelia Church Coan, these letters document the Coans' lives in Hilo, Hawaii, from 1834 to 1882 and reflect the missionary spirit of that period. The collection organized in five series: Diaries and Journals, Family Correspondence, General Correspondence, Miscellany, and Printed Matter.

Titus Coan's journals tell of his travels to distant lands in missionary endeavors. In 1833-1834 he recorded a trip to Patagonia to explore the possibility of mission fields in that region. Much of this journal was published in his book Adventures in Patagonia. Journals of two trips to the Marquesas Islands made in 1860 and 1867 describe the land and its inhabitants as well as the progress of missions there, while other journals tell of his journey and early years of residence in Hawaii, where he served for over forty-five years. These experiences were further amplified in his autobiography, Life in Hawaii.

The Coans' correspondence is primarily with family members, including their daughter, Harriet Fidelia Coan, a teacher at Punahou, Hawaii, and their son, Samuel Latimer Coan, who was living in San Francisco in the late 1860s and the 1870s, and describes the day-to-day events of their lives. Other correspondence relating to missionary work is that with Fidelia Coan's sister, Maria Church Robinson, who served with her husband as missionary to Siam from 1834 to 1847, at the same time that the Coans were beginning their service in Hawaii.

The General Correspondence series also reflects the religious feeling and missionary endeavors of the period. The Coans corresponded with other missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands and with friends at home, many of whom were active in societies that supported such work. Correspondents include Sophie Madeleine Du Pont (wife of Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont), Chester Smith Lyman, Mary Oliphant, and Sara Oliphant.

An extensive collection of printed matter is preserved with the collection. Much of this constitutes, in effect, an article file for Titus Coan consisting of journals to which he contributed. He was particularly interested in volcanoes and wrote many observations on the eruptions of Kilauea, the volcano on the slope of Mauna Loa on the island of Hawaii. These he contributed to the American Journal of Science and Arts. He also contributed extensively to missionary journals such as Missionary Herald and The Friend.

Copies of Titus Coan's two books are included in the Miscellany series along with numerous clippings and articles about him, a copy of Titus Coan; a Memorial (Chicago, Revell [1884] 248 pp.) by his second wife, Lydia Bingham Coan, and some material written in Hawaiian.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in five series:

- Diaries and Journals, 1818-1881
- Family Correspondence, 1818-1916
- General Correspondence, 1828-1915
- Miscellany, 1832-1957
- Printed Matter, 1806-1923
## Description of Series

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<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Box</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td><strong>Diaries and Journals, 1818-1881</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>Diaries and journals of Titus Coan and his wife, Fidelia Church Coan. Arranged chronologically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 2-13</td>
<td><strong>Family Correspondence, 1818-1916</strong></td>
<td>2-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2-13</td>
<td>Letters received and sent between family members. Arranged alphabetically by writer of letter. Typed copies of correspondence between Titus and his wife, Fidelia Church Coan, 1832-1872, are arranged chronologically at the end of the series.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 14-16</td>
<td><strong>General Correspondence, 1828-1915</strong></td>
<td>14-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 14-16</td>
<td>Correspondence with persons other than family members. Arranged chronologically.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 17-18</td>
<td><strong>Miscellany, 1832-1957</strong></td>
<td>17-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 17-18</td>
<td>Clippings about Titus Coan, wills, drafts of writings by members of the Coan family, and pamphlets and copies of books by Titus Coan. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 19-31</td>
<td><strong>Printed Matter, 1806-1923</strong></td>
<td>19-31</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 19-26</td>
<td><strong>Serial Publications, 1822-1923</strong></td>
<td>19-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 19-26</td>
<td>Journals, magazines, and serials publications containing writings of Titus Coan or references to him. Arranged by title and therein chronologically.</td>
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<td>BOX 27-31</td>
<td><strong>Books, 1806-1911</strong></td>
<td>27-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 27-31</td>
<td>Books relating to missionary work Hawaii and Polynesia, and containing references to Titus Coan and his work in Hawaii. Unarranged.</td>
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</table>
## Container List

<table>
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| BOX 1     | **Diaries and Journals, 1818-1881**  
Diaries and journals of Titus Coan and his wife, Fidelia Church Coan.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 1     | “Waymarks,” notations of events by Titus Coan, 1818-1881  
Patagonian journal, 1833, Aug. 16-1834, May  
Trip to Hawaii, 1834, Dec. 5-1835, Jan.  
Journal of Fidelia Church Coan, 1834-1837  
Early residence in Hawaii  
1835, Jan. 6-1839, Apr. 10  
1840, Aug. 20-1841, Mar. 5  
Account of baptism of Titus Munson Coan, 1836, Nov. 13  
Diary of Fidelia Church Coan, 1837-1838, 1841  
Register of letters by Fidelia Church Coan, 1838-1872  
Visit to Kilauea, 1855, July 1  
Trip to Marquesas Islands, 1860, Mar. 17-May 16  
Voyage to Marquesas Islands, 1867, Apr. 3-June 6  
Second voyage to the Marquesas Islands, 1867, Apr. 3-May 23 |
| BOX 2-13  | **Family Correspondence, 1818-1916**  
Letters received and sent between family members. Arranged alphabetically by writer of letter.  
Typed copies of correspondence between Titus and his wife, Fidelia Church Coan, 1832-1872,  
are arranged chronologically at the end of the series. |
| BOX 2     | Brown, Emma Smith, to Fidelia Church Coan, 1837-1851  
Carver, Amanda Church, to Titus and Fidelia Church Coan, 1832-1864  
Casey, Anna Munson Church Hill, to Titus and Fidelia Church Coan, 1833-1867  
Church, Barbara and Horace, to Fidelia Church Coan, 1841-1846  
Church family, miscellaneous correspondence, 1822; 1869  
Church, Jared O., 1833-1876  
Church, Samuel Clemon, 1832-1857  
Clark, Almira Church, 1832-1876; undated  
Clark, Maria, undated  
Clark, Samuel, 1838  
Coan family, miscellaneous correspondence, 1832, 1882  
Coan, Fidelia Church  
To Titus Coan, undated  
To Horace Church, undated  
Coan, Gaylord, 1818, 1814  
Coan, George and Mabel, 1831-1834 |
| BOX 3     | Coan, Harriet Fidelia  
To parents |
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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| BOX 4     | 1844-1864  
          | 1865-1870  
          | To father  
          | 1873       |
| BOX 5     | 1874-1881  
          | To parents, undated and fragments  
          | To brothers and nephew, 1856-1905  
          | To Samuel L. Coan (brother), 1863-1865; undated  
          | Coan, Samuel L.  
          | To parents  
          | 1849-1865  
          | 1866-1872  |
| BOX 6     | To Harriet Fidelia Coan (sister)  
          | 1854-1871  |
| BOX 7     | 1872-1875, 1885  
          | To Titus Munson Coan (brother), 1869  
          | Miscellaneous  
          | Coan, Titus and Fidelia  
          | To Harriet Fidelia Coan (daughter)  
          | 1844-1855  |
| BOX 8     | 1856-1864  |
| BOX 9     | To Harriet Fidelia Coan  
          | 1865-1868  |
| BOX 10    | 1869-1872, undated  
          | Coan, Titus  
          | To Harriet Fidelia Coan, 1873-1876  
          | To Fidelia Coan, 1866; 1870-1871  
          | To Samuel L. Coan (son), 1868-1871  
          | To Titus Munson Coan (son), 1855-1872; undated  
          | To Connie Ferson (niece), 1864; 1870-1882  
          | To William G. Ferson (nephew), 1864; 1870-1882  
          | To other family, 1835-1886  
          | Coan, Titus or Fidelia  
          | To George and Mabel Coan (brother), 1825-1877  
          | To George M. Coan (nephew), 1840; 1870-1879  
          | To Amanda Church Carver, 1836-1875  
          | To Jared O. Church, 1835-1872  
          | To Almira Church Clark, 1833-1854  
          | To Anna Munson Church Hill Casey, 1835-1848  
          | To Samuel Clemon Church, 1832-1837  
          | To Maria Church Robinson, 1831-1879  
          | To Gaylord Coan (father), 1833-1852  
          | To Sylvanus and Heman Coan (brothers), 1834-1835  
          | To Elizur Coan (brother), 1832-1846  
          | To Mary J. Coan (sister), 1835-1839  
          | To Ezra and Fanny Coan, 1835-1862
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| BOX 12    | To Fanny Coan, 1863-1882  
To Lottie Fancher (niece), 1881-1882  
To Sally Arnold (sister), 1835  
To other Church family members, 1835-1859  
To other Coan family members, 1837-1880  
Notes and abstracts of letters, 1836–1882  
Coan, Titus Munson, to mother, 1864  
Robinson, Maria Church  
To Titus and Fidelia Coan, 1833-1882; undated  
To Harriet F. Coan and Titus Munson Coan, 1881; undated  
Smith-Bagg, Abigail Church, 1864; 1868 |
| BOX 13    | Waters, Sarah Coan  
To Harriet Fidelia Coan (sister), 1852-1872  
To Philip M. Coan, 1916  
Letters of condolence on death of, 1916  
Miscellaneous family and unidentified or unknown relationship; fragments  
Letters of Titus and Fidelia Church Coan  
Typed copies, 1849-1872  
Extracts, 1832-1836; undated |
| BOX 14-16 | General Correspondence, 1828-1915  
Correspondence with persons other than family members.  
Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 14    | 1828-1841 |
| BOX 15    | 1842-1861 |
| BOX 16    | 1862-1915, undated  
Poems |
| BOX 17-18 | Miscellany, 1832-1957  
Clippings about Titus Coan, wills, drafts of writings by members of the Coan family, and pamphlets and copies of books by Titus Coan.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 17    | Certificates, passports, and indenture  
Clippings about Titus Coan and Hawaii  
Coan, Fidelia Church  
Drafts of verse  
Drafts of writings  
Coan, Harriet Fidelia  
Death and estate, 1906  
Miscellany  
Material in Hawaiian  
Miscellaneous  
Lists of letters  
Manuscripts  
Notes concerning correspondence |
Miscellany, 1832-1957

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Notes on last illness of Titus Coan
Pamphlets written by Titus Coan, 1846-1862

**BOX 18**
Pamphlets containing references to Titus Coan, 1818-1957
Speeches not by Titus Coan
Titus Coan memorial
*Titus Coan; A Memorial* by Lydia (Bingham Coan)
Waters, Sarah Coan, will and estate, 1916
Writings of Titus Coan
*Life in Hawaii*
*Adventures in Patagonia*

**BOX 19-31**
Printed Matter, 1806-1923

**BOX 19-26**
Serial Publications, 1822-1923
Journals, magazines, and serials publications containing writings of Titus Coan or references to him.
Arranged by title and therein chronologically.

**BOX 19**
*American Journal of Science and Arts*
1879, Mar.-1858, Jan.
**BOX 20**
1858, Nov.-1870, Mar.
**BOX 21**
1870, May-1880, July

**BOX 22**
*Missionary Herald*
1822-1839, Jan.
**BOX 23**
1840, July-1859, Sept.
**BOX 24**
1860, May-1885, Feb.
**BOX 25**
Hawaiian Mission Children's Society
*Annual Reports*
1853-1903
**BOX 26**
1904-1911
*The Friend*, 1852-1855, 1923
*Hawaiian Forester and Agriculturist*, 1905

**BOX 27-31**
Books, 1806-1911
Books relating to missionary work Hawaii and Polynesia, and containing references to Titus Coan and his work in Hawaii.
Unarranged.

**BOX 27**

Titus Coan Family Papers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| **BOX 28** | Anderson, Rufus, *Foreign Missions* (New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1869. 373 pp.)  
Wise, Lt., *Los Gringos* (New York, Baker and Scribner, 1849. 453 pp.)  
Cumming, C. F. Gordon, *Fire Fountains* (London, W. Blackwood, 1883. 2 v.)  
Bishop, Isabella Bird, *Six Months Among the Palm Groves, Coral Reefs, and Volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands* (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894) |
| **BOX 29** | Melville, Herman, *Omoo* (New York, United States Book, 1892. 365 pp.)  
Bliss, William R., *Paradise in the Pacific* (New York, Sheldon, 1873. 207 pp.)  
Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, *Jubilee Celebration of the Arrival of the Missionary Reinforcement of 1837* (Honolulu, Daily Bulletin Steam Print, 1887. 204 pp.)  
Mariner, William, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands in the South Pacific Ocean* (Edinburgh, Constable, 1827. 2 v.)  
*Life in Feejee, or Five Years Among the Cannibals*, by a lady (Boston, W. Heath, 1851. 423 pp.)  
Grant, M. Forsyth, *Scenes in Hawaii, or Life in the Sandwich Islands* (Toronto, Hart, 1888. 203 pp.)  
Stevenson, Robert Louis, *In the South Seas* (New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1908. 370 pp.)  
*A Memoir of Daniel Wheeler* (Philadelphia, Book Association of Friends, 1885. 250 pp.)  
Tyerman, Daniel, a George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, compiled by James Montgomery (New York, J. Leavitt, 1832. 3 v.)  
Anderson, Rufus, *The Hawaiian Islands: Their Progress and Condition Under Missionary Labors* (Boston, Gould and Lincoln, 1865. 450 pp.)  
**BOX 30** | |
| **BOX 31** | *Memoirs of Marmontel* (London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806. 4 v.)  
The Sugar Producing Capacity of the Hawaiian Islands (Judd and Detweiler, Printers, 14 pp.)  
Ellis, William, *Polynesian Researches* (Fisher, Son, and P. Jackson, 1831. 4 v.)  
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