

Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2010

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm73019224>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010292>

Prepared by Thelma Queen and David Mathisen

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2010
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Collection Summary

Title: Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1847-1905

ID No.: MSS19224

Creator: Bickerdyke, Mary Ann, 1817-1901

Extent: 1,800 items

Extent: 5 containers

Extent: 2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm73019224>

Summary: Nurse, agent for the United States Sanitary Commission, and pension attorney. Correspondence, lists, draft memoirs, printed matter, and other papers relating to Bickerdyke's family, her work as a Civil War nurse and agent for the United States Sanitary Commission, and her activities on behalf of Civil War veterans in the years following the war.

Online Content: The papers of Mary Ann Bickerdyke are available on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000057>. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available. A transcription dataset from "'Such Eventful Times': Women and the American Civil War" that includes transcripts from the Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers is available online at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/gdcdatasets.2023527887>.

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

Baker, Lucien--Correspondence.

Ball family--Correspondence.

Ball family.

Bickerdyke family--Correspondence.

Bickerdyke family.

Bickerdyke, Hiram--Correspondence.

Bickerdyke, James--Correspondence.

Bickerdyke, Mary Ann, 1817-1901.

Blue, Richard Whiting--Correspondence.

Cook, James H.

Dix, Dorothea Lynde, 1802-1887--Correspondence.

Livermore, Mary A. (Mary Ashton), 1820-1905--Correspondence.

Perkins, Walden--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.

Stone, Lucy, 1818-1893--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States Sanitary Commission.

Subjects

Military pensions--United States--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Places

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Veterans.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--War work.

Titles

Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers at the Library of Congress

Occupations

Lawyers.
Nurses.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Mary Ann Bickerdyke, nurse, agent for the U.S. Sanitary Commission, and pension attorney, were given to the Library of Congress by her grandchildren in 1969. Additional material was given by Marvin Litvin in 1977.

Processing History

The papers of Mary Ann Bickerdyke were arranged and described in 1973 by Thelma Queen and David Mathisen. The collection was expanded and revised in 1983. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Mary Ann Bickerdyke 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.

Online Content

The papers of Mary Ann Bickerdyke are available on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/collmss.ms000057>. *To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the online edition as available.* A transcription dataset from "'Such Eventful Times': Women and the American Civil War" that includes transcripts from the Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers is available online at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/gdc/gdcdatasets.2023527887>.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1817, July 19	Born, Knox County, Ohio
circa 1833	Attended Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio
1837	Studied nursing, Cincinnati, Ohio
1847	Married Robert Bickerdyke (died 1859)
1861	At start of Civil War distributed supplies to soldiers in Cairo, Ill., and worked to improve living conditions for the soldiers; named matron of military hospital there
1862-1865	Worked as agent for United States Sanitary Commission; set up field hospitals and cooked, cleaned, and nursed Union soldiers; traveled with the armies of generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman

1866	Resigned from duty as army nurse
1866-1867	Worked at Chicago Home for the Friendless, Chicago, Ill.
1867-1869	Operated boarding house, Salina, Kans., and campaigned to get former soldiers to move west to Kansas
1870-1874	Conducted missionary work, New York, N.Y.
1874	Returned to Kansas; secured relief for victims of grasshopper plague
1876	Moved to San Francisco, Calif., and got job at United States Mint
1887	Returned to Kansas
1901, Nov. 8	Died, Bunker Hill, Kans.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Mary Ann Ball Bickerdyke (1817-1901), a Civil War nurse and agent for the United States Sanitary Commission who was known as "Mother" Bickerdyke to Union soldiers, span the years 1847-1905.

A large portion of the Mary Ann Bickerdyke Papers consists of correspondence grouped into family, general, and special correspondence files. Among the correspondence of the Ball and Bickerdyke families are letters between Bickerdyke and her sons, James and Hiram. The general correspondence contains letters pertaining to her activities during the Civil War and from Civil War veterans seeking her aid in securing their pensions. A folder of special correspondence contains letters from Lucien Baker, Richard Whiting Blue, Dorothea Lynde Dix, Mary Ashton Rice Livermore, Walden Perkins, Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), and Lucy Stone.

Subject files in the collection contain Civil War supply lists and disbursements, passes, and an incomplete draft memoir. Other files pertain to her post-war work on behalf of former Union soldiers, the Woman's Relief Corps, and efforts to aid residents of Kansas following the grasshopper plague of 1874. Miscellaneous items include biographical material, financial papers, a few photographs, and printed matter.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material. Family correspondence is arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and general correspondence is arranged chronologically by year.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Family correspondence
BOX 1	Ball, Aaron T. Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, Cyrus and Lizzie Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, C. C. Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, Mary K. Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, Olive Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, J. P. W. A. Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, Webb C. Digital content available
BOX 1	Ball, Elizabeth E. Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Charles R. Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Elizabeth Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Florence Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Hiram Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, James
BOX 1	From Hiram Bickerdyke (brother) Digital content available
BOX 1	From Mary Ann Bickerdyke (mother) Digital content available
BOX 1	General Digital content available
BOX 1	To Mary Ann Bickerdyke Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Jane Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, John Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Joseph Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Mary E. Digital content available
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, Robert Digital content available

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Bickerdyke, W. W. Digital content available
BOX 1	Clark, Anna R. Digital content available
BOX 1	Clark, Ella Digital content available
BOX 1	Clark, George W. Digital content available
BOX 1	Cochran, Asenath Digital content available
BOX 1	Gordon, F. E. Digital content available
BOX 1	Hutchinson, Ruth Digital content available
BOX 1	Merritt, Christiana Digital content available
BOX 1	Pond, Mrs. Charles M., Jr. Digital content available
BOX 1	Wainright, Mary E. Digital content available
BOX 1	Woodcock, Eliza Digital content available
BOX 1	Unidentified, and other family correspondents Digital content available
BOX 2	Special correspondence Digital content available
BOX 2	General correspondence
BOX 2	1859 Digital content available
BOX 2	1862 Digital content available
BOX 2	1863 Digital content available
BOX 2	1864 Digital content available
BOX 2	1865 Digital content available
BOX 2	1866 Digital content available
BOX 2	1867 Digital content available
BOX 2	1868 Digital content available
BOX 2	1869 Digital content available
BOX 2	1870 Digital content available
BOX 2	1874 Digital content available
BOX 2	1875

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 2	Digital content available 1876-1884
BOX 2	Digital content available 1885
BOX 2	Digital content available 1886
BOX 2	Digital content available 1887-1888
BOX 2	Digital content available 1889
BOX 2	Digital content available 1890
BOX 2	Digital content available 1891
BOX 2	Digital content available 1892
BOX 2	Digital content available 1893
BOX 2	Digital content available 1894
BOX 2	Digital content available 1895
BOX 3	Digital content available 1896
BOX 3	Digital content available 1897
BOX 3	Digital content available 1898
BOX 3	Digital content available 1899
BOX 3	Digital content available 1900
BOX 3	Digital content available 1901-1905
BOX 3	Digital content available Undated
BOX 3	Digital content available Subject file
BOX 3	Chicago Home for the Friendless, Chicago, Ill. Digital content available
BOX 3	Civil War activities
BOX 3	Memoir, incomplete draft Digital content available
BOX 3	Miscellany 1 of 2 Digital content available 2 of 2 Digital content available
BOX 3	Supply lists and disbursements Digital content available

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 3	Cook, James H. 1 of 2 Digital content available 2 of 2 Digital content available
BOX 3	Kansas grasshopper plague, 1874-1875 Digital content available
BOX 4	National Association of Army Nurses of the Civil War, 1899-1900 Digital content available
BOX 4	Pensions
BOX 4	Bickerdyke, Mary Ann, 1886-1901 Digital content available
BOX 4	Soldiers Digital content available
BOX 4	Soldiers' homes and soldiers' orphans' homes, 1865, 1899-1901 Digital content available
BOX 4	Western College, Macon, Mo. Digital content available
BOX 4	Woman's Relief Corps Digital content available
BOX 4	Miscellany
BOX 4	Biographical papers Digital content available
BOX 4	Business and calling cards, and notes Digital content available
BOX 4	Financial papers
BOX 4	Cook, James H. Digital content available
BOX 4	Miscellaneous Digital content available
BOX 4	General 1 of 2 Digital content available 2 of 2 Digital content available
BOX 4	Honors and tributes, 1886, 1896-1903 Digital content available
BOX 5	Newspaper clippings 1 of 2 Digital content available 2 of 2 Digital content available
BOX 5	Photographs Digital content available
BOX 5	Printed matter
BOX 5	1855, 1865-1899 Digital content available
BOX 5	1901-1906 Digital content available

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 5	Undated Digital content available
BOX 5	Railroad passes, 1865-1885, 1898 Digital content available