

Lucretia Rudolph Garfield Papers

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Washington, D.C.
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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Collection Summary

Title: Lucretia Rudolph Garfield Papers

Span Dates: 1807-1958

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1844-1918)

ID No.: MSS50179

Creator: Garfield, Lucretia Rudolph, 1832-1918

Extent: 55,000 items ; 152 containers plus 2 oversize ; 70 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Wife of President James A. Garfield. Correspondence, family papers, biographical material, addresses, articles, photographs, clippings, scrapbooks, memorial poetry, and other papers relating to the Garfield family, including the assassination of President Garfield.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Blaine, James Gillespie, 1830-1893--Correspondence.
Booth, Almeda A. (Almeda Ann), 1823-1875--Correspondence.
Burnett, Frances Hawks Cameron--Correspondence.
Cleveland, Frances Folsom, 1864-1947--Correspondence.
Field, Cyrus W. (Cyrus West), 1819-1892--Correspondence.
Garfield family.
Garfield, Abram, 1872- Abram Garfield papers.
Garfield, Irvin McDowell, 1870-1951 Irvin McDowell papers.
Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Assassination.
Garfield, Lucretia Rudolph, 1832-1918.
Grant, Julia Dent, 1826-1902--Correspondence.
Guiteau, Charles J. (Charles Julius), 1841-1882.
Harrison, Benjamin, 1833-1901--Correspondence.
Hay, John, 1838-1905--Correspondence.
Hayes, Rutherford Birchard, 1822-1893--Correspondence.
Howells, William Dean, 1837-1920--Correspondence.
Lincoln, Robert Todd, 1843-1926--Correspondence.
Lowell, James Russell, 1819-1891--Correspondence.
McKinley, William, 1843-1901--Correspondence.
Polk, James K. (James Knox), 1795-1849--Correspondence.
Polk, Sarah Childress, 1803-1891--Correspondence.
Reid, Whitelaw, 1837-1912--Correspondence.
Rockwell, Almon Ferdinand, 1835- --Correspondence.
Rudolph family.
Selleck, Rebecca--Correspondence.
Smith, Theodore Clarke, 1870-1960.
Stanley-Brown family.
Stanley-Brown, Mary Garfield, 1867-1947--Correspondence.
Swaim, David Gaskill, 1834-1897--Correspondence.
Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson, Baron, 1809-1892--Correspondence.
Tyler, Julia Gardiner, 1820-1889--Correspondence.
Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, 1819-1901--Correspondence.

Organizations

Disciples of Christ.

Subjects

Art.
Genealogy.
Literature.
Trials (Assassination)

Occupations

Presidents' spouses--United States.

Administrative Information

Provenance

Most of the papers of Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, wife of President James A. Garfield, were given to the Library in 1960 by Mrs. Max Sellers, widow of Abram Garfield, the last surviving child of President Garfield. Thereby she carried out the wishes of her husband, who had died in 1958 before he could transfer the papers. Other members of the family, including Lucretia Garfield's granddaughter, Ruth Stanley-Brown Feis, gave other portions in 1963-1968, some being received with the papers of James Rudolph Garfield and Harry Augustus Garfield. Smaller additions were acquired by purchase, 1970-1975.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1968 and revised and expanded in 1976. The finding aid was revised in 2009.

Related Material

The Manuscript Division also holds the papers of other members of the Garfield family, including [James A. Garfield](#), [Harry Augustus Garfield](#), and [James Rudolph Garfield](#).

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Lucretia Rudolph Garfield in these 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 papers of Lucretia Rudolph Garfield 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, Lucretia Rudolph Garfield Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1832, Apr. 19	Born on a farm near Gavettsville, Ohio
1849	Became student at Geavga Academy, Chester, Ohio, where she met James A. Garfield
1851	Became student at Eclectic Institute, Hiram, Ohio, where her family then made its home; taught some terms in Ohio public schools
1858	Married James A. Garfield (died 1881)

1860	Birth of daughter Eliza, called "Trot" (died 1863)
1863	Birth of Harry Augustus Garfield Husband James A. Garfield resigned commission in Union Army to enter Congress
1863-1881	Lived in Hiram and Mentor, Ohio, and in Washington, D.C., while her husband was in Congress
1865	Birth of James Rudolph Garfield
1867	Birth of Mary Garfield Summer trip to Europe with her husband
1870	Birth of Irwin McDowell Garfield
1872	Birth of Abram Garfield
1874	Birth of Edward Garfield (died 1876)
1880	James A. Garfield elected president
1881	James A. Garfield assassinated by Charles J. Guiteau Lived at Cleveland and Mentor, Ohio; after 1885, made her home in Mentor
1887-1888	Spent winter in Europe
1888	Death of her mother-in-law, Eliza Ballou Garfield, who made her home at Mentor, Ohio
1897	Death of her father, Zeb Rudolph, who lived with her most of the time after 1881
1901	Spent winter in Florida
1902-1918	Spent winters in Pasadena, Calif.
1918, Mar. 13	Died, Pasadena, Calif.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Lucretia Rudolph Garfield (1832-1918), widow of President James A. Garfield (1831-1881), span the years 1807-1958, with the bulk relating most specifically to her dating from 1844 until 1918. The collection includes correspondence, genealogical papers, biographical material, addresses, articles, photographs, clippings, financial matter, scrapbooks, memorial poetry, and other papers relating to the Garfield family. The collection is organized in twelve series: [Family Correspondence I](#); [Family Correspondence II](#); [Special Correspondence](#); [General Correspondence and Other Papers](#); [Writings, Diaries, Drafts, and Other Memorabilia](#); [Miscellany](#); [Financial Papers](#); [Scrapbooks](#); [Other Memorial and Biographical Material](#); [Abram Garfield Papers](#); [Irvin McDowell Papers](#); and [Stanley-Brown Family Papers](#).

Lucretia Garfield's papers reflect her early interest in the Disciples of Christ Church, in art and literature, in civic and political affairs, in current events, in the careers and families of her children, and in woman's rights. She was dedicated to preserving the record of her husband's career as an army officer, congressman, and president; she maintained and improved their Mentor, Ohio, home, "Lawnfield," that became a museum. She worked assiduously at caring for her husband's papers, aided in publishing his *Works of James Abram Garfield*, and in 1912 began helping the biographer Theodore Clarke Smith.

Although Lucretia Garfield lived quietly, her correspondence reflects some social life, especially when she visited members of her family in Washington. Her political convictions were originally Republican, but her interest was awakened by the Progressivism of her son James Rudolph Garfield's friend, Theodore Roosevelt. Towards the end of her life she was an admirer of her son Harry Augustus Garfield's friend, Woodrow Wilson.

The [general correspondence](#) bulks largest for the period of the eighty days of the president's fatal illness; most of these letters mainly give evidence of the interest and affection of the American people. Letters from prominent people during this period are in the [special correspondence](#).

Among the most significant correspondence is Lucretia Garfield's long correspondence with her children and their families. These communications seem fairly complete except for the letters she wrote to her daughter, Mary Garfield Stanley-Brown; they apparently were not preserved. Lucretia's correspondence with Harry Augustus Garfield and James Rudolph Garfield is contained in their collections of papers, which can also be consulted in the Manuscript Division.

The [financial papers](#) show Lucretia Garfield's generosity to her family, her philanthropy, and the expense of maintaining homes in Ohio and California; they include the records of the Garfield Fund raised by the American people for the benefit of the president's widow and children and administered by the United States Trust Company.

The great amount of [scrapbook](#) and other printed material resulted from Garfield's published request, made shortly after the president was shot, that anything printed about her husband be sent to her. The bound scrapbooks are numbered 39-63; scrapbooks numbered 1-38 are in the president's papers.

Among the prominent or frequent correspondents in the collection are James Gillespie Blaine, Almeda Booth, Cyrus W. Field, John Hay, Robert Todd Lincoln, James Russell Lowell, Whitelaw Reid, Almon Ferdinand Rockwell, Rebecca Selleck, David G. Swaim, and Victoria, Queen of Great Britain. There are a few letters from presidents or their wives including Frances Folsom Cleveland, Julia Dent Grant, Benjamin Harrison, Rutherford Birchard Hayes, William McKinley, Sara Childress Polk, James K. Polk, and Julia Gardiner Tyler. Among literary correspondents are Frances Hawks Cameron Burnett, William Dean Howells, and Alfred Tennyson, Baron Tennyson.

The papers of [Abram Garfield](#) (1872-1958), youngest son of the president, are fragmentary, but include correspondence and addresses and articles giving evidence of his interest in architecture, city planning, politics, American history, the work of the blind, and the preservation of family papers; they extend from 1881 to 1958.

There are obvious gaps in the Lucretia Rudolph Garfield Papers, for she had a unique frank authorizing her to receive as well as send mail free and she doubtless received many letters not worthy of preservation. Others which perhaps should have been preserved were probably destroyed. In accordance with the request of the Presidential Papers Section, Manuscript Division, anything that may have been seen by the president has been withdrawn to be indexed and microfilmed with his papers. The inevitable commingling of family correspondence requires that these papers be examined in conjunction with those of other members of the family: President James A. Garfield, Harry Augustus Garfield, and James Rudolph Garfield.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in twelve series:

- [Family Correspondence I, 1881-1918](#)
- [Family Correspondence II, 1807-1917](#)
- [Special Correspondence, 1853-1915](#)
- [General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1844-1912](#)
- [Writings, Diaries, Drafts, and Other Memorabilia, 1854-1912](#)
- [Miscellany, 1877-1918](#)
- [Financial Papers, 1881-1917](#)
- [Scrapbooks, 1881-1882](#)
- [Other Memorial and Biographical Material](#)
- [Abram Garfield Papers, 1881-1958](#)
- [Irvin McDowell Garfield Papers, 1880-1908](#)
- [Stanley-Brown Family Papers, 1873-1928](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-36	<p><u>Family Correspondence I, 1881-1918</u></p> <p>Letters sent to and received by Lucretia Rudolph Garfield from her children, Abram Garfield, Irvin Garfield, Mary Garfield Stanley-Brown, and members of their families. Arranged alphabetically by name of child and chronologically therein.</p>
BOX 37-52	<p><u>Family Correspondence II, 1807-1917</u></p> <p>Letters exchanged with other close relatives and their families. Includes letters received by Eliza Ballou Garfield and early Rudolph family miscellany. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member and chronologically therein.</p>
BOX 53-64	<p><u>Special Correspondence, 1853-1915</u></p> <p>Largely letters received from prominent or frequent correspondents. Includes some correspondence with distant relatives who wrote frequently. Arranged alphabetically and chronologically therein.</p>
BOX 65-87	<p><u>General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1844-1912</u></p> <p>Largely letters received. Arranged chronologically by day. Also includes at the end of the file letters transmitting resolutions on President's James A. Garfield's death and undated invitations.</p>
BOX 88-89	<p><u>Writings, Diaries, Drafts, and Other Memorabilia, 1854-1912</u></p> <p>Miscellaneous material formerly found in a volume labeled "School Days," drawings and drafts of poetry, talks, notes, will and related statements, and a few drafts of letters. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.</p>
BOX 90-92	<p><u>Miscellany, 1877-1918</u></p> <p>Biographical material about James A. Garfield and Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, certificates, inventories, and notes. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.</p>
BOX 93-104	<p><u>Financial Papers, 1881-1917</u></p> <p>Account books, canceled notes and checks, farm and other property records, and a file on the United States Trust Co., administrator of the Garfield Fund. Arranged by type of material.</p>
BOX 105-127	<p><u>Scrapbooks, 1881-1882</u></p> <p>Twenty-five scrapbooks titled "Eighty Days History" (2 July-19 Sept. 1881); two volumes of scrapbooks on the inauguration and assassination of James A. Garfield; eight volumes of "Memorial Poetry," and seven volumes of addresses, sermons, and proceedings. Arranged by topic or type of material.</p>
BOX 128-146	<p><u>Other Memorial and Biographical Material</u></p> <p>Biographical material relating to President James A. Garfield, including volumes about his assassination, medical history, and the trial of Charles J. Guiteau. Includes miscellaneous printed matter and newspaper clippings relating to the Garfield family and its interests. Arranged by topic or type of material.</p>

BOX 147-152

Abram Garfield Papers, 1881-1958

Correspondence and miscellany.

General correspondence is arranged chronologically and special correspondence by name of correspondent or subject.

BOX 153

Irvin McDowell Garfield Papers, 1880-1908

General and family correspondence.

Arranged chronologically.

BOX 154

Stanley-Brown Family Papers, 1873-1928

Correspondence and miscellany.

The correspondence is arranged chronologically.

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Family Correspondence I, 1881-1918

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BOX 37-52	Family Correspondence II, 1807-1917 Letters exchanged with other close relatives and their families. Includes letters received by Eliza Ballou Garfield and early Rudolph family miscellany. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member and chronologically therein.
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BOX 51	Rudolph, Zeb, family 1807-1897
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BOX 53-64	Special Correspondence, 1853-1915 Largely letters received from prominent or frequent correspondents. Includes some correspondence with distant relatives who wrote frequently. Arranged alphabetically and chronologically therein.
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	Beecher, Henry Ward, 1880
	Black, Jeremiah, 1879-1881
	Blaine, James Gillespie, and Harriet, and family, 1876-1896
	Bok, Edward, 1885-1887
	Booth, Almeda, 1854-1867
	Bowen, Henry C., 1881-1886
	Boynton, Anna and Silas, 1870-1901
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	Cowles, Edwin, 1876-1881
	Cox, Jacob D. and Helen, 1860-1890
	Cram, Mary, 1877-1878
	Crump, William T., 1881-1888
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Special Correspondence, 1853-1915

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	Gladstone, William E., 1881, 1898
	Grant, Julia Dent., 1880-1896
	Gridley, Marinde, 1885-1889
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	Harber, Giles and Jeannette, 1880-1903
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	Hobart, Anna E., 1881-1887
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	Hopley, Catherine C., 1880-1884
	Hoppe, Ellen L., 1892-1898
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Special Correspondence, 1853-1915

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	White, Mary E., 1857-1866
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BOX 65-87	General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1844-1912
	Largely letters received.
	Arranged chronologically by day.
	Also includes at the end of the file letters transmitting resolutions on President's James A. Garfield's death and undated invitations.
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General Correspondence and Other Papers, 1844-1912

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Miscellany, 1877-1918

Container

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	"Rough Sketch of an Introduction to a life of General Garfield," by Lucretia Rudolph Garfield (copy), 1887
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	Medical charts during last illness, Jan.-Feb. 1918
	Memorial services, Mar. 1918
	Obituary notices, Mar. 1918
	Helen N. Garfield's biographical notes on Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, Mar. 1918
	Lucretia Garfield Comer's description of inauguration of 1881, 1952
	"The Passing of a Beautiful Life," by Polly Garfield, Mar. 1918
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