

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Blodget, Arba (1879-1949)** **MC 1998.2**

Material: Family Papers (1859-1919)

Volume: 0.25 linear feet (1 Document Box)

Donation: Gift of Samuel and Anna Moyerman, 1966

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Arba Blodget was a drama critic, playwright, producer, and manager. Born in Pennsylvania in 1879, he attended Penn Charter School and graduated from Lafayette College. Living in Philadelphia, Mr. Blodget was a drama critic for the *Philadelphia Record*. He would later work in New York City to produce and write several Broadway shows with the Trial Theatre Co., under the direction of prominent Broadway producer Henry Savage. In 1909 Arba married Laura Livingston. The Blodgets struggled in the early stages of their marriage due to Arba's travels with his theater company. A series of letters from Mr. Blodget to his wife, although exceedingly affectionate, show the stress that their separation had caused.

Laura maintained correspondence with her family as well, with letters from her mother, "Mama", and her brother Max. Laura's father, who at the time of the letters had passed away, was involved with the founding of the Standard Oil Co., and the Livingston family seemed to have enjoyed financial security as a result of Max, Sr.'s business association with John D. Rockefeller.

There is reason to believe that the Livingston family is associated with the Spooner family, also featured in the collection. Charles H. Spooner married Laura Loomis, and the couple had a son, Charles Alfred Spooner, or "Fred." There is little known about the Spooner family, except that they lived in the Philadelphia area at the same time the Blodgets were married. Also, Charles. H. Spooner seems to have been involved in the theater scene in Philadelphia as either a playwright or producer.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

This collection is composed primarily of letters to and from Arba and his wife, Laura (Livingston) and her immediate family. They address both personal and business interests and chiefly cover the decade from 1910 to 1919. A significant amount of the material, also in the form of personal and business letters, details the lives of Charles H. Spooner, his wife Laura (Loomis) Spooner, and their son, Charles Alfred Spooner. The Spooner materials date from 1859 to 1908. Correspondence comprises the first section of the collection, the letters largely being arranged alphabetically by its author's last name.

The second section of the collection, Miscellaneous Materials, includes a journal kept by Arba Blodget that begins in October 1910. This section also contains assorted newspaper clippings from Arba's various theater productions.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - MC 1998.2

CORRESPONDENCE

- Folder 01) Blodget, Arba
 - 50 Letters to Laura Blodget - 1910-1916
 - Letter to John Valieant, Esq. - Nov. 24, 1911
- Folder 02) Blodget, Laura
 - 3 Postcards received - 1914-1917
- Folder 03) Caine, Derwent Hall
 - Letter to Arba Blodget - Dec. 27, 1907
 - Letter to Laura Blodget - undated
- Folder 04) Creamer, A. E.
 - 4 Unidentified letters received - 1900
- Folder 05) Livingston, "Mama"
 - Letter to Arba Blodget - Feb. 3, 1913
 - 9 Letters to Laura Blodget - 1911-1919
- Folder 06) Livingston, Max, Jr.
 - Letter to Laura Blodget - Jan 28, 1911
 - Letter to Laura Blodget - July 16, 1917
 - Letter to Laura Blodget - May 14, 1919
- Folder 07) Spooner, Charles Alfred
 - Letter to Charles H. Spooner - March 25, 1892
 - Letter to his mother, Laura Spooner - Jan. 20, 1883
- Folder 08) Spooner, Charles Alfred
 - 14 Business-related letters received - 1902-1904
- Folder 09) Spooner, Charles Alfred
 - 6 Miscellaneous personal letters received - 1901-1908
- Folder 10) Spooner, Charles H.
 - 11 Letters to Laura Loomis (Spooner) - 1859-1873

BOX 1 - MC 1998.2

- Folder 11) Spooner, Charles H.
4 Miscellaneous letters received - 1885-1894
- Folder 12) Spooner, Laura
Letter to Dr. Luther Peters - April 17, 1893
Letter received from Dr. Peters - April 14, 1893
Letter to Charles Alfred Spooner - Sept. 6, 1901
Letter to Charles Alfred Spooner - Sept. 8, 1901
- Folder 13) Spooner, Laura
9 Letters from her friend, Emma - 1890
- Folder 14) Spooner, Laura
2 Miscellaneous business letters received - 1902

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS

- Folder 15) Blodget, Arba
Journal sketches - October 1910
- Folder 16) Blodget, Arba
Miscellaneous theater clippings - 1916

This collection register was prepared by Adam J. Cohen, October 1998.