



SIGNATURE HISTORY

CELEBRITY MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE KIES COLLECTION

MANUSCRIPTS, ARCHIVES, AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

JANUARY 17-MARCH 2, 2012

Alexandre Dumas, père (1802-1870)

French author

Letter to an unidentified English publisher (in French), circa 1850s.

(Autograph letter, signed)

Dumas, author of *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*, offers an English publisher his *Memoirs* and *Isaac Laquedem*, with his permission to “make all the cuts to the memoirs that you think necessary regarding English Puritanism and the special locale.” He also mentions several other available titles. (Kies 65)

Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

French poet and novelist

Letter to Giraud (in French), December 18, 1839.

(Autograph letter, signed)

Hugo, author of *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* and *Les Misérables*, writes to [Eugène?] Giraud to discuss a disagreement about a political vote. With Kies’ English translation. (Kies 150)

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

English poet

Letter to the Reverend John Fernie, circa 1858.

(Autograph letter, signed)

Tennyson gives an interpretation of one of his poems, the song “Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height,” from *The Princess*. With Kies’ caption card, which includes a transcription. (Kies 332)

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863)

English author

Note (with envelope) to Lady Elizabeth Thackeray, May 28, 1854.

(Autograph note, signed)

Thackeray, author of *Vanity Fair*, writes to a relative, Lady Elizabeth Thackeray, accepting an invitation. With Kies’ caption card, which includes a transcription. (Kies 335)

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

Scottish novelist and poet

Letter to his solicitor, January 17, 1803.

(Autograph letter, signed)

Scott, author of *Ivanhoe* and *The Lady of the Lake*, writes to his solicitor about financial matters, and also mentions his wife, Charlotte, who was pregnant and “very soon expecting to be confined.” With Kies’ caption card, including a transcription, and his 1962 publication of the letter and his analysis. (Kies 306)

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919)

American President

Letter to Thomas A. Janvier, December 27, 1897.

(Typed letter, signed)

Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy at the time of this letter, writes to Janvier thanking him for a book, *Admirals All*. With Kies’ caption card. (Kies 284)

William Howard Taft (1857-1930)

American President

Letter to President Theodore Roosevelt, July 18, 1908.

(Typed letter, signed, with handwritten postscript)

Taft writes to President Theodore Roosevelt about a speech (or “letter of acceptance”). This was almost certainly his acceptance speech for the 1908 Republican Party presidential nomination, since Taft had been selected as the nominee in June at the party convention in Chicago. Taft delivered his acceptance speech in Cincinnati on July 28. (Kies 330)

Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924)

American President

Letter to Captain W. J. Hunter, December 24, 1918.

(Typed letter, signed)

Wilson was in Paris negotiating a peace treaty immediately after World War I when he wrote this letter responding to an invitation from Captain Hunter. (Kies 368)

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

American President
Commission, February 6, 1862.
(Document, signed)

Commission of Brigadier General Henry W. Benham. The document also bears the signature of Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War. With Kies' caption, and the invoice from his purchase. (Kies 452)

John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937)

American industrialist
Letter to Wallace Cathcart, August 25, 1908.
(Typed letter, signed)

Rockefeller writes to thank Cathcart for an invitation to visit a men's group at a Cleveland church. With Kies' caption card. (Kies 279)

William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891)

American general
Letter to Mr. Bristow, February 25, 1871.
(Autograph letter, signed)

Sherman writes to Bristow urging him and his wife to rent or purchase the house next door. With Kies' caption card, which includes a transcription. (Kies 312)

Billy Sunday (William Ashley Sunday) (1862-1935)

American evangelist
Letter to "B.D.," January 14, 1930.
(Typed letter, signed)

Sunday's letter was written during his "Evansville Evangelistic Campaign" in 1930. He writes about a manuscript and letters that "B.D.," perhaps a member of his staff, sent to him for signature. (Kies 329)

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915)

American educator, writer, and lecturer
Letter to Professor C.E. Norton, October 12, 1898.
(Manuscript letter, signed)

Washington sent this to Norton as a cover letter with the annual report to the trustees of the Tuskegee Institute. It is signed by Washington but written in another hand, and may have been a form letter. With Kies' caption card, which includes a transcription. (Kies 352)

William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)

American politician
National Abstainers' Union pledge card, witnessed by Bryan.

C. Austin Miles, Jr. signed this card pledging to abstain from drinking alcohol, with Bryan as his witness. (Kies 380)

Helen Keller (1880-1967)

American author, activist, lecturer
Letter to Paul Kies, March 25, 1958.
(Typed letter, signed)

In this form letter, Keller writes to solicit financial support for the American Foundation for the Blind. (Kies 412)

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

American poet, author, dramatist
Manuscript poem, signed, May 22, 1941.

Hughes copied and signed this excerpt from his poem "Brass Spittoons" for the boys of the Virginia Episcopal School. (Kies 149)

Pearl S. Buck (1892-1973)

American writer
Letter to Miss Dakin, March 11, 1941.
(Typed letter, signed)

In this form letter addressed to Miss Dakin (probably Washington State College faculty member Dorothy Dakin), Buck, author of *The Good Earth*, solicits support for the China Relief Legion. (Kies 35)

James Hilton (1900-1954)

English novelist
Letter to Mr. E.J. Halter, May 14, 1945.
(Typed letter, signed)

Hilton, author of *Lost Horizon* and *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, writes to Halter with his advice about the most important of his books from a collector's point of view. He recommends the first edition of *Lost Horizon* because of its rarity, but also because President Franklin Delano Roosevelt quoted from the novel in his important 1937 "Quarantine Speech." (Kies 134)

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

American poet
Letter, October 20, 1869.
(Autograph letter, signed)

In this letter to an unidentified recipient, Whittier writes about "trying again to raise \$300 for our teacher among the colored people." With a copy of a letter Kies wrote to Doctor Trueblood asking for assistance with his research about the Whittier letter. (Kies 357)

Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923)

French theatrical performer
Undated note and 1895 theater program (in French).
(Autograph note, signed)

Bernhardt's brief undated note written on her personal stationery is difficult to read, and sometimes illegible, but it appears to be a simple expression of friendship. With Kies' caption card, including his transcription and English translation, and an 1895 program for one of Bernhardt's performances. (Kies 18)

Lillie Langtry (1852-1929)

British theatrical performer
Letter to Mrs. Ayer, circa 1880s.
(Autograph letter, signed)

Langtry writes on her monogrammed stationery, probably during a visit to the United States, about personal matters: rental of a house, and a photograph session where she posed in "Galateas scanty drapery" and was insulted by a group of American women. With Kies' caption card, which includes a transcription. (Kies 180)

Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906)

Norwegian poet and dramatist
Note (in German), May 18, 1887.
(Autograph note, signed)

Ibsen, author of *A Doll's House* and *Peer Gynt*, writes to an unidentified woman who has requested a sample of his handwriting. With Kies' caption card, which includes a transcription and English translation. (Kies 410)

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1829-1882)

English poet and painter
Note to Frederick Craven, October 26, 1871.
(Autograph note, signed)

Rossetti writes to Craven, a collector of his paintings, about a drawing of Beatrice. With Kies' caption card, including a transcription. (Kies 287)

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900)

Anglo-Irish poet and dramatist
Letter to George Alexander. Undated (no later than summer 1894).
(Autograph letter, signed)

Wilde presents to George Alexander, star of the notorious February 14, 1895 premiere of *The Importance of Being Earnest* at London's St James Theatre, the tragicomic scenario upon which Frank Harris based his *Mr. and Mrs. Daventry* (1900). This scenario also serves as the source for the King's Head Theatre 2011 production of *Constance*, controversially billed as

Wilde's final play. With Kies' caption card. (Kies 358) With a printed transcript from A.E.W. Mason's *Sir George Alexander & the St. James' Theatre* (1969).

Charles II, King of England (1630-1685)

Document, signed, May 13, 1670.
Countersigned by Sir John Trevor.

King Charles II grants to George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham, the privilege of holding three fairs each year at Helmesley, as well as a market each Saturday at the same place. With an extensive caption by Kies, including a transcription. (Kies 44)

Victoria, Queen of England (1819-1901)

Document, signed, November 22, 1838.

Queen Victoria was just 19 when she signed this order to "The Commissioners of Our Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works and Buildings" authorizing the killing of does for her own table and for "Lords and Others mentioned in the annexed list." Her signature is at the top of the document (Victoria R). With Kies' caption, including a transcription. (Kies 345)

Pope Julius III (1487-1555; Pope 1550-1555)

Document, signed (in Latin), April 8, 1553.

The Pope grants a petition from Jo. Jacobus Gabutius to resign as a Knight of St. Peter. His signature appears twice: "Fiat. J." and "Fiat ut petitur. J." With Kies' caption card. (Kies 169)

William Gladstone (1809-1898)

Prime Minister of Britain
Letter to Mr. Young, May 22, 1868.
(Autograph letter, signed)

In this letter written in 1868, before the election that would make him Prime Minister, Gladstone discusses political matters, including a mention in the postscript of the Irish Church. With Kies' caption card, including a transcription. (Kies 105)

Adolf Hitler (1889-1945)

Head of the Nazi Party in Germany
Typed document, signed, January 16, 1942.
Countersigned by William Keitel, Chief of Staff of the Army.

Hitler relieves General-Fieldmarshall Ritter von Leeb of his command for health reasons, and transfers him to the Reserves. The embossed seal of the Nazi government appears on the left side of the page. With Kies' caption card, including a transcription and English translation.



Paul Philemon Kies (1891-1971) was a professor of English at Washington State University (1924-1956). He was a discerning and devoted collector of autograph manuscripts, eventually accumulating over 400 items, of which 29 are included in this exhibit. WSU acquired his collection in 1971, along with a large body of supporting documentation (Kies' research notes, transcriptions, translations, articles, exhibit lists, and illustrations). A guide to this collection is available on the

MASC website: www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/masc/finders/cg308.htm.

MASC also holds other Kies collections, including his photographs (PC 28) and two small collections of his personal papers (Cages 364 and 736).

These selections from the Kies autograph collection are original manuscripts, primarily letters, of prominent American and European writers, monarchs, statesmen, military figures, and performers. Most of the items are autograph letters (written in the hand of the sender), some with transcriptions and translations.

A companion digital collection with images of the items in this exhibit is available: content.wsulibs.wsu.edu/cdm-signature/

Curators: Cheryl Gunselman and Greg Matthews

Exhibit graphics: Jeff Kuure

Digital collection produced by Doug Lambeth

