Hill, Mary.

Mary Hill correspondence
1888-1910
(bulk dates 1888-1890)

Abstract: The Mary Hill correspondence, spanning the years 1888-1910 (bulk 1888-1890), comprises .3 linear feet (87 items) of handwritten correspondence received by Mary Hill and primarily documenting her son, William (Will) Hill's employment with the Pennsylvania Railroad.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 523
Creator: Hill, Mary.
Title: Mary Hill correspondence
Inclusive Dates: 1888-1910
Bulk Dates: 1888-1890
Extent: .3 linear feet (87 items)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 523, Mary Hill correspondence, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/


Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction: Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law. Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library, http://www.lib.udel.edu/cgi-bin/askspec.cgi
Biographical Note

Mary Hill lived with her husband George Hill at 3601 Baring Street, in the Powelton Village neighborhood of West Philadelphia. At the end of the nineteenth century, this neighborhood was a mix of upper-middle class industrial tycoons and middle class families utilizing newly established electric rail lines. The Pennsylvania Railroad company purchased a large tract of land there in 1852 for future development, and the 30th Street Station was eventually built in this area.

The main correspondent in the collection is Mary’s son, William (Will) Hill. Weekly correspondence between June 1888 and October 1890, with some brief gaps, informally documents a portion of Will’s employment with the Pennsylvania Railroad company. From the content of the letters, it appears that Will worked with the corps of engineers responsible for marking and laying the tracks in the state of Pennsylvania and some areas of Virginia. He worked both in the field and in the office of the corps’ various temporary stations throughout Pennsylvania.

Sources:

http://www.swarthmore.edu/Humanities/langlab/personal/powelton/Powelton.html

All other information derived from the collection.
Scope and Content Note

The Mary Hill Correspondence, spanning the years 1888-1910 (bulk 1888-1890), was a gift of Samuel Moyerman circa 1970-1972. The collection comprises .3 linear feet (87 items) of handwritten correspondence, many accompanied by the original envelopes, received by Mary Hill at 3601 Baring Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The letters are arranged by sender and are housed in three folders: Letters from Will Hill (F1 and F2), and Letters from other friends and family (F3). The letters from Will Hill, Mary Hill’s son, are addressed most commonly to "Ma" or "Ma and Pa", with a few addressed to "Pa" and signed "Your affectionate son, Will." These letters comprise the majority of the collection. In his frequent correspondence, Will discussed current projects with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, as well as various leisure activities and the weather conditions. Will often times briefly mentions his working conditions, his feelings toward various supervisors, and the natural events that delayed railroad construction. It appears that Will traveled often with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, as his letters were sent from various places in Pennsylvania as well as Alexandria, Virginia. Between June 1888 and June 1889 (F1) Will sent letters from Canadensis, Latrobe, Williamsport, Altoona, Braddock, Sutersville, Morrisville and Newtown, Pennsylvania, and Alexandria Virginia. The letters from October 1889 to October 1890 (F2) reflect a more settled period in Will’s career, with letters from Muncy, Williamsport, and Freeport Pennsylvania.

The other letters written to Mary Hill (F3) are from various correspondents: Bettie Hill Shaw, her son George, a friend Clara Shaw, and a cousin Mary Allen. These letters discuss possible visits, and thank-you notes for Christmas gifts. This folder also contains two pieces pertaining to the purchase of clothing, one from dressmaker Sadie M. Brooks of Kater and Brooks, and Eshleman and Craig Co., Custom Shirrmakers and Launderers, both of Philadelphia.

This small collection is fragmentary. However, the letters from Will Hill to his mother Mary may be of interest to those researching the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Hill, Mary--Correspondence.
Hill, William (Will)--Correspondence.
Shaw, Bettie Hill--Correspondence.
Hill, George--Correspondence.
Shaw, Clara--Correspondence.
Allen, Mary--Correspondence.

Corporate Names

Pennsylvania Railroad.

Topical Terms

Engineers--Correspondence.

Geographic Names

Pennsylvania--History--19th century--Sources.
Philadelphia--Social life and customs--History--19th century--Sources.
Philadelphia--Social life and customs--History--20th century--Sources.
Alexandria (Va.)--History--19th century--Sources.

Form/Genre Terms

Personal correspondence.

Occupation

Engineers.

Personal Contributors

Hill, William (Will), correspondent.
Detailed Description of the Collection

Letters from Will Hill, 1888 June-1889 June [Box 1 F1]
35 items

Letters from Will Hill, 1889 October-1890 October [Box 1 F2]
39 items

Letters from other friends and family, 1888-1910 [Box 1 F3]
13 items