

John Bennett Collection

*The Charleston Archive, Charleston County Public Library
Compiled by Harlan Greene, Edited by Kathleen Gray, 2009*

Collation: 8 linear ft.

Description: The materials in the John Bennett Collection span roughly ca. 1878 to ca. 1940. They include typescript fragments of his novels *Master Skylark* and *Barnaby Lee*. Other materials include published, as well as original, silhouettes from his book *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo* (1928). There is one illustration from *Barnaby Lee* by artist Clyde O. DeLand, as well; and original and published photographs of John Bennett (including some by Doris Ulmann). Also included are some miscellaneous silhouettes, and works of art by Bennett, a few letters, and some biographical information. His typewriter and typewriter table are also part of the collection.

Copies of Bennett's published works, including first editions of *Master Skylark*, *The Treasure of Peyre Gaillard*, and *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo*, are located in the Rare Books Collection of the Charleston Archive.

Historical Note: John Bennett was born in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1865. By the time he visited Charleston in 1898, he was a well-known children's writer. His books *Master Skylark* (1897) and *Barnaby Lee* (1902) would eventually be considered children's classics. He married Susan Smythe of Charleston and became a permanent resident in 1902. He aided the founding of the Charleston County Public Library (1931) and helped prosper the fledgling institution. He became "godfather" of the Children's Room of the Public Library; it bore his name for a number of years in its buildings on Rutledge Avenue and later King Street. Over the years he donated photographs of himself, bits of original manuscripts, original artwork, books, and a variety of other materials. John Bennett died in Charleston in 1956.

The largest collection of John Bennett's papers is in the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, SC; another collection is in the Ross County Historical Society, Chillicothe, OH. The Doris Ulmann photographs of John Bennett are part of a set now in the South Carolina State Museum. For more biographical information on Bennett, see Harlan Greene's *Mr. Skylark: John Bennett and the Charleston Renaissance* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

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Collection Outline

I. Galley Proofs

- Folder 1: Rolled galley proof of *Master Skylark*, with author notations BOX 1
- 2: Rolled galley proof of *Barnaby Lee*, heavily edited and illustrated by author and Tudor Jenks, *St. Nicholas Magazine* editor and author (1 of 2)
- 3: Rolled galley proof of *Barnaby Lee*, heavily edited and illustrated by author and Tudor Jenks, *St. Nicholas Magazine* editor and author (2 of 2)
- 4: Galley proof of *Master Skylark: Will Shakespeare's Ward*, dramatization by Edgar White Burrill and John Bennett; heavily edited by Bennett
- 5: Fragment of galley proof of "A Jest of Little John" from *St. Nicholas Magazine* with edits by John Bennett

II. Serialization of *Barnaby Lee*

- Folder 6: Paper labeled by John Bennett to wrap contents of Box 2 BOX 2
- 7: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Nov. 1900 (Installment #1)
- 8: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Dec. 1900 (Installment #2)
- 9: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Jan. 1901 (Installment #3)
- 10: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Feb. 1901 (Installment #4)
- 11: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Mar. 1901 (Installment #5)
- 12: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Apr. 1901 (Installment #6)
- 13: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. May. 1901 (Installment #7)
- 14: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Jun. 1901 (Installment #8)
- 15: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Jul. 1901 (Installment #9)
- 16: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Aug. 1901 (Installment #10)

- 17: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Sep. 1901 (Installment #11)
- 18: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Oct. 1901 (Installment #12)
- 19: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Nov. 1901 (Installment #13)
- 20: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Dec. 1901 (Installment #14)
- 21: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Jan. 1902 (Installment #15)
- 22: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Feb. 1902 (Installment #16) BOX 3
- 23: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Mar. 1902 (Installment #17)
- 24: "Barnaby Lee." *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Apr. 1902 (Installment #18)

III. Fragments of Novels

- Folder 25: Fragmentary typescript of first, or early draft of first chapter of *Barnaby Lee*, with holograph corrections and additions, and labeled envelope
- 26: Fragments and assembled pieces of various drafts of *Barnaby Lee*, with holograph additions and edits; very brittle condition
- 27: Two cyanotypes of Clyde O. DeLand illustrations for *Barnaby Lee*
- 28: Fragments of various drafts of *Master Skylark*, with calligraphic envelope by author; very brittle condition
- 29: Fragments of various drafts of *Master Skylark*, with periodic notations of which installment of *St. Nicholas Magazine* the piece is from
- 30: *St. Nicholas Magazine*. Feb. 1897, containing chapters 12–14 of *Master Skylark*
- 31: Postcards of English scenes, many relating to *Master Skylark*.
- 32: Calligraphy by John Bennett and exhibit labels from Charleston County Public Library's showing of materials related to *Master Skylark*
- 33: Newspaper clipping, re film of *Master Skylark*

IV. Miscellaneous Writings and Artwork

- Folder 34: "His Father's Price." Pages from *St. Nicholas Magazine* with handwritten notes by author
- 35: "The Little Messenger", Vol. I, No. 1 (24 Aug 1878) and Vol. IV, No. 1 (26 Jul 1881). Chillicothe, Ohio juvenile newspaper co-edited by John Bennett and others
- 36: "The Magnificat of the Hills" typescript poem decorated by John Bennett
- 37: Printed copy of Bennett's drawing (1896) of Salt Sulphur Springs, WV
- 38: Photograph of John Bennett's painting of Madame Margot's cottage
- 39: Photocopy of printed silhouette (1945) by John Bennett

V. Biographical and Related Materials

- 40: Correspondence of John Bennett to staff and children, Charleston County Public Library, with envelopes and card (1936, 1941)
- 41: Photocopies and mimeographs of essays on John Bennett, including one by Janie Smith, Children's Librarian, and a humorous "Appendix to the Complete Works of John Bennett," a spoof of his appendectomy
- 42: Bibliography of Material in the Charleston Free Library, compiled by Elizabeth Allen Hyde
- 43: Miscellaneous newspaper clippings
- 44: Images of John Bennett. Three printed images (1927, 1927, ca.1890)
One original photograph of Bennett with children at public library (1942)
- 45: Miscellaneous printed matter: one printed image and map of Chillicothe, OH

VI. Oversize Artwork

- Folder 46: Study for oil portrait of John Bennett (c. 1930s), created by Mrs. B. King Couper. Framed, pigment flaking BOX 4
- 47: Printed illustration of *The Canterbury Tales*, given to the Charleston County Library by John Bennett

- 48: Photographs of John Bennett: 4 Doris Ulmann images (3 signed, ca. 1927), 1 image of Bennett on Mackinac Island (ca. 1898), 1 Melchers studio portrait (ca. 1920s) BOX 5
- 49: Clyde O. Deland illustration for *Barnaby Lee* (1901)
- 50: Pen and ink drawing of Bennett's workroom with typewriter, etc. (1896)
- 51: Thirteen proof sheets of silhouettes included in *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo*
- 52: Thirteen proof sheets of silhouettes included in *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo* (duplicate of Folder 51)
- 53: Eleven proof sheets of silhouettes included in *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo*, some cut out
- 54: Two original mounted silhouettes (musicians in parade; children and piper piping) BOX 6
- 55: Ten original mounted silhouettes of "Little Peter and the Giant" from *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo*
- 56: Fourteen original mounted silhouettes of "The Cat, the Cow, the Dog and the Dairymaid" from *The Pigtail of Ah Lee Ben Loo*

VII. Miscellaneous Materials

- A. Remington No. 2 Typewriter, used by Bennett in composing his books. Illustrated in pen and ink drawing in Folder 50
- B. Typewriter Table for Remington No. 2 (see above)