

Random recollections of a year abroad in Europe and Africa, vol. 1 England

Ms. Codex 1880

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

February 2018

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	4
Scope and Contents.....	4
Administrative Information.....	5
Controlled Access Headings.....	5
Collection Inventory.....	7

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Slack, J. H., (John Hamilton), 1834-1874
Title	Random recollections of a year abroad in Europe and Africa, vol. 1 England
Call number	Ms. Codex 1880
Date	1858
Extent	1 volume (+ 1 leaf, 1 leaflet)
Language	English
Abstract	A handwritten diary, by J. H. Slack of Philadelphia. The volume, probably bound by Slack, was written in 1858 and recounted his trip to England in spring an summer of 1856. Slack stated in the preface of the diary " [I] wrote with a double purpose, first as a souvenir of my voyage for my own gratification, and secondly to afford pleasure to my large circle of friends to whom my private journal would be inaccessible."

Cite as:

Random recollections of a year abroad in Europe and Africa by J. H. Slack, 1858, Ms. Codex 1880, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Slack was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania the son of John and Hetty K. Longstreth Slack. In 1856 he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with degrees in arts and medicine. In addition to practicing medicine in Philadelphia, Slack was a painter, composer, naturalist, and amateur printer. He was an avid fisherman and eventually became interested in farm fishing. He bought 169 acres in Bloomsbury, New Jersey and named his new venture Troutdale Fish Ponds. The hatchery Slack created raised brook trout, salmon, and shad and introduced some species to the Delaware River. He published books on the subject and had a catalog of supplies catering to other fish culturalists. Slack was commissioner of fisheries of New Jersey and a founding member of the America Fish Culturists' Association. Slack married Thirza Anderson in 1861 and the couple had four children. Thirza continued the work at Troutdale following Slack's death in 1874.

Scope and Contents

A handwritten diary, possibly bound by Slack, recounting his trip to England in spring an summer of 1856. Stamped on the spine of the volume is Slack's random recollections. Slack stated in the preface of the diary " [I] wrote with a double purpose, first as a souvenir of my voyage for my own gratification, and secondly to afford pleasure to my large circle of friends to whom my private journal would be inaccessible." Slack wrote of his travels throughout England including sightseeing in the Isle of Man, Liverpool, London, Birmingham, and Stratford-upon-Avon. He wrote detailed descriptions of the places he toured including the British Museum, the Crystal Palace, Madame Tussauds, Warkwick Castle, Westminster Abbey, Thames, and the Zoological Gardens, among other excursions. He noted the libraries at the various sites. While on the Isle of Man, Slack recounted his fishing adventure with Charles Dickens and Robert Rawson. Slack recorded his voyage to England, the custom house, and his departure. He wrote of fellow travelers, friends, hotels, and his stay in a private home at Ely Place in London. A photograph portrait of Slack precedes the title page. The diary is written on the rectos only, divided into fourteen chapters, with numbered leaves a-c; 1-169. Written at the bottom of the title page is Philadelphia, April 1858. Laid in the volume is a four-page printed catalog of fishes and supplies entitled: Catalogue of fishes and fish culturalist's supplies for sale at Troutdale Fish Ponds, the establishment of the late J. H. Slack, M. D. Bloomsbury, N. J., Fouth edition, Easton, Penna., Free Press Steam Book and and Job Print., 1875. A letter dated December 9, 1955, from Morris Spivack to Monica Dickens is also laid in the volume.

Chap. 1. The voyage.

Chap. 2. Liverpool.

Chap. 3. Liverpool continued.

Chap. 4. The Isle of Man.

Chap. 5. Liverpool again.

Chap. 6. London.

- Chap. 7. The outdoor sights of London.
Chap. 8. The religious edifices of London.
Chap. 9. The muddy highway and its vicinity.
Chap. 10. The vicinit of London.
Chap. 11. A thing of shreds and patches.
Chap. 12. Birmingham.
Chap. 13. Warwick, Stratford and Kemilworth.
Chap. 14. Finsihed England and vol. 1.
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Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Modern First Editions (Leeds, UK), 2017.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Codices (bound manuscripts)

- Diaries
- Leaflets (printed works)
- Manuscripts, American--19th century
- Photographs
- Sales catalogs

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- England--Description and travel--19th century
- Isle of Man--Description and travel--19th century

SUBJECT(S)

- American diaries--19th century--Specimens
- American diaries--Male authors--19th century

Collection Inventory

	Volume
Random recollections of a year abroad in Europe and Africa, vol. 1 England, 1858.	1