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Edie Clark Papers

1834-2018 (*Bulk:* 1939-2017)
63 boxes (94.5 linear feet)
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Read collection overview

Beloved for her essays on New England life and for a long-running column in Yankee magazine, Edie Clark was born in northern New Jersey in 1948 and raised near Morristown. A graduate of Beaver College, Clark cut short a career as editor for the Chilton Company in 1973 when she and her husband, inspired by Scott Nearing, moved to Vermont to pursue a simpler, more self-sufficient life. Drawing on the skills honed at Chilton, Clark developed a successful editorial business, which led her to approach Yankee Magazine in 1978 with the idea of writing an article on Abby Rockefeller and composting toilets, beginning an association that would last nearly twenty years. In 1990, Clark began writing a regular column on country life for Yankee, and in the years since, she has written dozens of essays and seven books, including *The place he made* (2008), a memoir about her second husband's struggle with cancer; *States of grace* (2010), containing essays on "real Yankees;" and *What there was not to tell* (2013), an account of Clark's search to uncover her parents' experiences during the Second World War. Following a lengthy period of ill health, Clark retired from writing in 2017.

The record of a popular writer known for her depictions of contemporary New England, the Edie Clark Papers contain drafts and printed copies of nearly all of Clark's work. An assiduous researcher, she gathered background materials on topics ranging from Lyme disease to the New England-Canadian border region to psychics and Spiritualists, and she corresponded or conducted interviews with dozens of people who featured in her work, including the author Carolyn Chute (author of *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*) and her husband Michael, then leaders in the so-called Second Maine Militia. Even more voluminous are some remarkable Clark family materials, including dozens of essays and letters by Clark's grandmother Eleanor Sterling Clark and over 2,000 letters from her parents. Luther and Dorothy Clark, written during the Second World War while they were serving in the Army Air Corps and Marine Corps, respectively. These letters formed the basis for Clark's remarkable memoir, *What there was not to tell*.

Background on Edie Clark

Edie Clark was raised in a comfortable suburban setting in northern New Jersey but became known for her stories of life in small town New England. Clark's grandfather, Luther Stowell Clark, was a prosperous New York banker with Blake Brothers and Co., and her grandmother Eleanor Sterling Clark was a leader in local educational and cultural life and a talented writer. Luther Stowell Clark, Jr. (1911-1994) followed his father to Princeton and after graduation in 1936, began work as an engineer with an insurance rating company.

Since childhood, Luther Clark, Jr., had in mind to marry Dorothy Rahmann of Summit, N.J., but she was less

certain, and after meeting a young man, Theron G. "Tom" Platt, on vacation in the Adirondacks, she was torn as to which to pursue. All three were drawn into the service: Platt became a pilot in the 90th Bomb Group, Army Air Corps, and Luther an engineer with the Air Corps' 3rd Service Brigade. In 1942, Dorothy wrote to Platt after he shipped out for duty in the South Pacific, to tell him that she had would agree to marry, only to learn that he had been killed in action. Dorothy later joined the Women's Auxiliary of the Marine Corps, assigned to Miramar Air Station in California where she processed Marines returning from duty in the Pacific.

After three years' service in North Africa and Corsica, Luther returned home and pursued Dorothy to marry him. The couple were engaged in October 1945 and gave birth to their first child, Christina Hayden Clark, on Sept. 13, 1947, followed by Edie in 1948.

From a young age, Clark enjoyed writing, but as a student at Miss Gill's School and Beaver College, she was more interested in athletics than academics. After graduation, she moved to Philadelphia and worked briefly as an editor with a technical publisher before being hired into a similar position with Chilton Publications, known primarily for their technical manuals, but also as publisher of Frank Herbert's Dune.

Scope of collection

A record of a popular writer known for her depictions of contemporary New England, the Edie Clark Papers contain drafts and printed copies of nearly all of Clark's essays, columns, and books, along with a handful of short stories. An assiduous researcher intent on grounding her writing in the day to day rhythms of New England's regional culture and personalities, Clark collected a wealth of background materials on topics ranging from Lyme disease to the New England-Canadian border region to psychics and Spiritualists, and she corresponded or conducted interviews with dozens of people who featured in her work. Correspondence is scattered throughout the collection, but there is a particularly thick exchange with Carolyn Chute (author of *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*) and her husband Michael, who were leaders in the Second Maine Militia.

Even more voluminous are some remarkable family materials, including dozens of essays and letters by Clark's grandmother Eleanor Sterling Clark, and over 2,000 letters from her parents Luther and Dorothy Clark, written while they were serving in the Army Air Corps and Marine Corps, respectively, during the Second World War. These letters formed the basis for Clark's remarkable memoir, *What there was not to tell*.

Inventory

Yankee development series; Connecticut River manuscript

Box 312066 0401 67014
Books

Box 312066 0401 67997
Family papers; Sally's letters; Tom's letters, audiotapes

Box 312066 0401 67103
Writings, correspondence, family papers

Box 312066 0401 67167
Articles files

Box 312066 0401 67005
Connecticut River series manuscript, Beatrice Trum Hubter; *The Place He Made*

Box 312066 0401 67041
Correspondence (1990s); family papers ("granny's writings")

Box 312066 0401 67149
Family papers, photo albums, letters

Box 312066 0401 67130
Article files

Box 312066 0401 67112
Family papers: mom's diaries, photos

Box 312066 0401 67069
Fan mail, writings (article files), photographs, yearbooks, memory book

Box 312066 0401 67372
Writings, letters, family papers

Box 312066 0401 67121
Letters, personal

Box 312066 0401 67158
Family papers, letters

Box 312066 0401 67050
Cards, letters; Iceland trip; Yankee "dead stories"

Box 312066 0401 67023
Family papers; correspondence

Box 312066 0401 67078
Audiocassettes

Box 312066 0401 67354
Paul Bolton

Box 312066 0401 72507
Family papers; correspondence; yearbooks; maps

Box 312066 0401 67345
Family papers: photographs, publications, letters

Box 312066 0401 67327
Paul Bolton

Box 312066 0401 67363
Writings (article files), correspondence, photos

Box 312066 0401 67443
Writings, correspondence (1987-2000)

Box 312066 0401 67461
Family papers

Box 312066 0401 67185
Family Papers: Odell family, cards, stories, poems

Box 312066 0401 67247
Dad's correspondence, 1937-1996

Box 312066 0401 67309
Subject files; correspondence, 1978-2005

Box 312066 0401 67489
Correspondence, cards

Box 312066 0401 67292
Correspondence; research materials; article files; Lyme disease

Box 312066 0401 67274
Correspondence, 1931-1951

Box 312066 0401 67318
Magazine articles, drafts, research

Box 312066 0401 67210
Writings (article files); correspondence

Box 312066 0401 67425
Correspondence; writings (articles)

Box 312066 0401 67452
Fan mail

Box 312066 0401 68004
Bermuda; St. Joseph's Church (Worcester, Mass.)

Box 312066 0401 67470
Article files

Box 312066 0401 66925
Article files

Box 312066 0401 68013
Subject files/article files: water stories

Box 312066 0401 66916
Cards; Yankee files; Mary's Farm

Box 312066 0401 67283
Correspondence; writings/article files

Box 312066 0401 67265
Correspondence, fan mail; Northern NE Review

Box 312066 0401 66961
Family papers; World War II correspondence

Box 312066 0401 67407
Writings: article files; issues of Readers' Digest

Box 312066 0401 67381
Book drafts (Chesham Depot), research notes, article files

Box 312066 0401 67194
Vermont, 1996; fan mail; Connecticut River series

Box 312066 0401 66998
Writings/article files

Box 312066 0401 67390
Research files, audiocassettes

Box 312066 0401 67238
The Place He Made, early versions

Box 312066 0401 67032
Writings/article files, correspondence

Box 312066 0401 67434
Article files, subject/research files

Box 312066 0401 67256
Manuscripts, drafts

Box 312066 0401 67176
The Place He Made, drafts; research files

Box 312066 0401 66970
Article files; slides

Box 312066 0401 67201
The Place He Made, drafts; Yankee "dead stories"

Box 312066 0401 67087
Water series; cards, letters

Box 312066 0401 67096
Writings/article files; correspondence

Box 312066 0401 67416
Elwyn Meader; St. Jonhsbury

Box 312066 0401 66934
Article files

Box 312066 0401 68022
Yankee "dead stories"; Connecticut River series

Box 312066 0401 66952
Article files

Box 312066 0401 67229
The Place He Made; personal: calendars, photographs

Box 312066 0401 66989
Article files (1991-2002)

Box 312066 0401 68166

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Edie Clark, 2018.

Processing Information

Processed by SCUA staff, September 2023.

Language:

English

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Cite as: Edie Clark Papers (MS 1018). Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

- Authors--New England
- New England--Social life and customs--20th century
- Spiritualism
- World War, 1939-1945
- Yankee Publishing Company

Contributors

- Clark, Edie (Edie Sterling) [main entry]
- Chute, Carolyn
- Clark, Dorothy Rahmann
- Clark, Eleanor Sterling
- Clark, Luther Stowell, Jr.

Genres and formats

- Audiocassettes
- Oral histories

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