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The Stephen Crane Collection at Syracuse University

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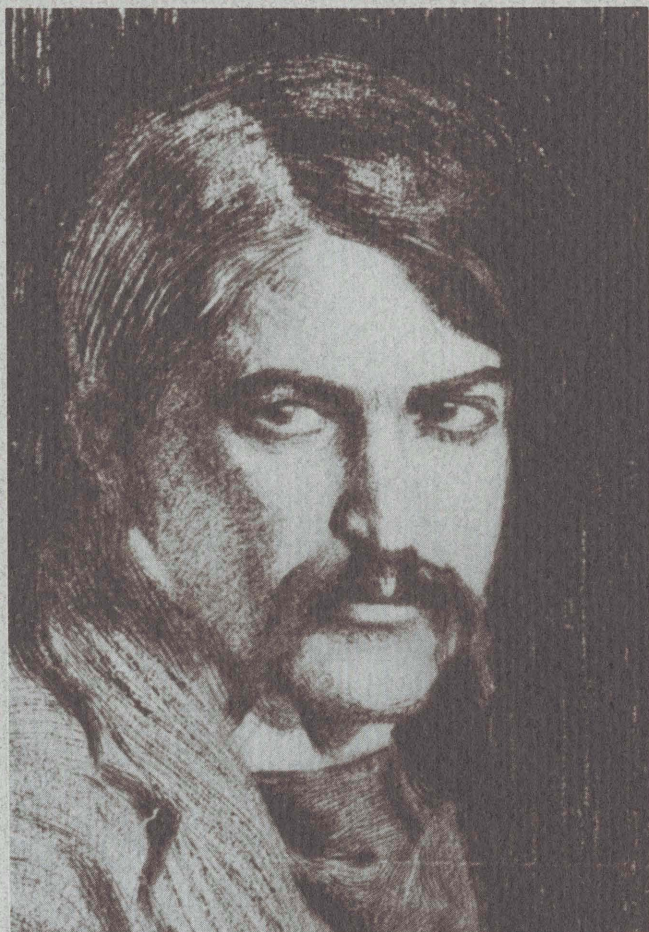
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The Stephen Crane Collection at Syracuse University

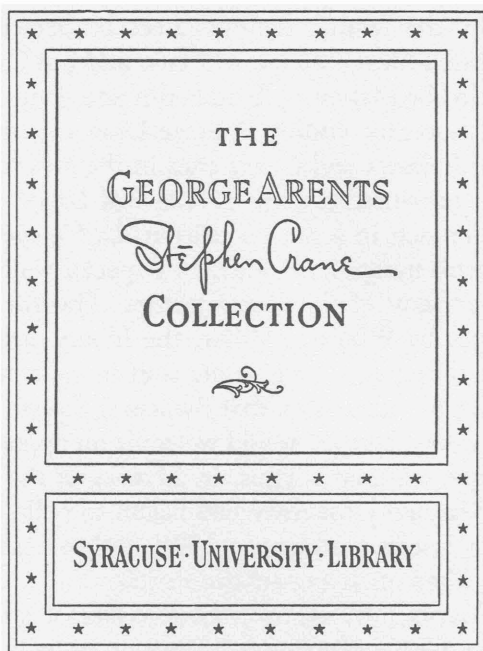
BY EDWARD LYON

The acquisition of the Melvin H. Schoberlin Collection provides the welcome occasion for a review of Syracuse University's book and manuscript holdings on Stephen Crane. Originally formed through the determined scholarly interest of the first rare book librarian, Lester G. Wells (1894–1972), the holdings now comprise more than a dozen individual collections. There are Crane letters and manuscripts, correspondence of publishers and contemporaries, memorabilia donated by the family, reminiscences by Syracuse University classmates, research files of Crane scholars, and the Crane book collections assembled by Melvin H. Schoberlin and Ames W. Williams.

Melvin H. Schoberlin, visiting Syracuse University during his 1948 research tour of libraries and Crane sites in the Northeast, called at the library and presented a copy of *The Red Badge of Courage*, as translated into French in a prewar edition, *La Conquête du Courage* (Paris: Les Libertés françaises, 1939), to a special collections department that lacked most of the Crane rarities. The gift was acknowledged on 20 May by Wharton Miller, the library director, who admitted that the library had made a late start in collecting Crane and urged Schoberlin to “remember that Syracuse, though not too fat in its special collections budget, would welcome an opportunity to offer a home for Crane material”. Thus, in advance of the Crane revival of the 1950s, Syracuse University had begun to collect the works of Crane, who was briefly a student in 1891, and in Lester G. Wells it had the skilled librarian to pursue the search.

In George Arents (1875–1960), book collector and friend of libraries, Syracuse University found a donor equal to the challenge of building a research collection on Stephen Crane. Indeed, the original Syracuse University Crane Collection was largely the gift of George Arents, who donated letters, manuscripts, and first editions, including a presentation copy of the yellow-wrapped 1893 *Maggie*. He made

possible the acquisition of the biographically important letters to Nellie Crouse, as well as Crane letters and memorabilia from Corwin Knapp Linson, the artist in whose studio Crane read Civil War accounts for *The Red Badge of Courage*. These donations complemented his acquisition of the Crane book collection formed by the Crane bibliographer Ames W. Williams, which arrived at Syracuse in 1950. A description of this material was published as Appendix Three, "The George Arents Stephen Crane Collection at Syracuse University" in *Stephen Crane's Love Letters to Nellie Crouse*, edited by Edwin H. Cady and Lester G. Wells (Syracuse University Press, 1954), pp. 75–87. This book presented all the Crane letters then at Syracuse and constituted the first separate publication of Crane letters in book form; the donor's devotion to this collection is reflected in its dedication "to George Arents whose love of books has greatly aided this one".



Among other collections are the papers of George Peck (1797–1876), Stephen Crane's maternal grandfather, and researchers' correspondence with Crane's niece, Edith F. Crane (1886–1961). Crane scholars are well represented in the collections. There are small groups

of correspondence of Crane biographers Thomas Beer, John Berryman, and R. W. Stallman. (The surviving Thomas Beer Papers are at Yale University, the John Berryman Papers are at the University of Minnesota, and the R. W. Stallman Papers are at the University of Connecticut.) Correspondence files and research notes were donated by Lillian B. Gilkes, biographer of Cora Howorth Stewart (1865–1910), Crane's common-law wife.

Detailed summaries of the Syracuse University Stephen Crane holdings follow by category.

LETTERS

Stephen Crane's letters are so widely scattered that no one institution or collector can claim a predominant share. Of those so far identified, Syracuse University holds approximately one quarter. With the appearance of the article "New Stephen Crane Letters in the Schoberlin Collection" by Paul Sorrentino and Stanley Wertheim in this number of the *Courier*, all the Stephen Crane letters at Syracuse University to date are now published. The seventy-nine original Crane letters at Syracuse are the following:

To Nellie Crouse, seven letters, 31 December 1895 to 1 March 1896, a total of 50 pages.

To James B. Pinker, Crane's English literary agent, twenty-three letters, 1899–1900.

To Paul Revere Reynolds, Crane's American literary agent, twenty-six letters, 1897–99.

To Louis C. Senger, Jr., a cousin of the painter-illustrator Corwin Knapp Linson, eleven letters and postal cards, 1895–97.

To other correspondents, twelve letters, 1890–99. Among these addressees are Viola Allen, Armistead Borland, Lucius L. Button, Willis B. Hawkins, Corwin Knapp Linson, and the publishers Cope-land and Day.

Additionally, Syracuse holds five letters, 1893–99, addressed to Crane; forty-two letters, 1899–1904, of Cora Crane (thirty-five of them addressed to James B. Pinker) and one letter, 1910, addressed to her; and more than one hundred letters, 1894–1954, from Crane's contemporaries that relate to him or his works.

MANUSCRIPTS

Seventeen Stephen Crane manuscripts include his earliest surviving manuscript, written when he was about nine, the childhood verse

"I'd Rather Have"; poems from *The Black Riders* (1895) and *War Is Kind* (1899); and the Whilomville story "The Angel-Child". A recent addition is a typescript of one of the *Sullivan County Sketches*, "An Explosion of Seven Babies", the gift of William P. Tolley in 1984.

Most of these manuscripts were known to the editors of the University of Virginia edition of *The Works of Stephen Crane* (1969–76) and are credited to either Syracuse University or Melvin H. Schoblerlin; they are listed in briefest form. Some recent additions were unknown to the editors of the Virginia edition, and one provides a holograph copy-text. These additions are described in fuller detail.

"Across the Covered Pit" Typed manuscript, 3 p.

"The Angel-Child" Autograph manuscript, 10 p., ink.

"A Desertion" Autograph manuscript, 2 p., pencil.

[A Detail] Autograph manuscript, 7 p., pencil.

"An Explosion of Seven Babies" Typed manuscript, 8 p.

"Fast Rode the Knight" (poem) Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p., ink.

"Greed Rampant" Typed manuscript, 3 p.

"I looked here / I looked there" (poem) Autograph manuscript, 1 p.

"I'd rather have" (poem) Autograph manuscript, 2 p. on 1 leaf, ink. ca. 1879–80.

"In a large vaulted hall" (poem) Autograph manuscript, 1 p., pencil.

"In Heaven, / Some little blades of grass" (poem) Autograph manuscript, 1 p., ink.

"Jack" Autograph manuscript, 7 p., ink.

"Lines" (cover title) Typescripts of five poems: "The impact of a dollar upon the heart", "My Cross!", "The successful man has thrust himself", "A god came to a man", and "One came from the skies", 1 p. cover + 3 p. text.

[A little ink more or less!] "What? / You define me God with these trinkets?" (poem, lines 7–19 only) Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p., ink. At the foot of the manuscript is Crane's note to Elbert Hubbard: "Oh, Hubbard, mark this well. Mark it well! If / it is over-balancing your discretion, inform me. / S. C."

"'Ol' Bennett' and the Indians" Autograph manuscript, 3 p., ink.

"Prologue" Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p., brown ink on ruled, wove paper (311 x 210 mm.). Purchase, 1985.

“Should the wide world roll away” (poem) Autograph manuscript, 1 p., ink.

PRESENTATION INSCRIPTIONS AND ANNOTATIONS

Presentation inscriptions by Crane are rare, although not so rare as to justify the description “almost unknown” in an early bibliographic checklist. Syracuse has sixteen such inscriptions or annotations, not counting its four copies of *The Lanthorn Book* (New York: The Sign o’ the Lanthorn [1898]), each of which is signed by Crane at the end of his story “The Wise Men”. Additional books, signed by Crane and once owned by him, are listed below in the section on Crane’s library. The inscriptions range in date from 1889 (a rare “Stephen T. Crane” signature, an indication of his conjectured middle name) to 1900 and a wish for a “long 20th Century” just after the New Year’s hemorrhage that presaged his death five months later. Because not all of these have previously been published, these inscriptions and annotations are listed with full detail. Many of them display Crane’s typically undotted *i*’s and *j*’s and uncrossed *t*’s.

To Armistead Borland, in an autograph album signed by classmates at Claverack College and Hudson River Institute: “You little Annex — / That would be on a level / With desperados and the like / Four to one / Is’nt much fun / For the fellow the kids go to fight / Very sincerely / Your friend / Stephen T. Crane / N.Y C. / C.C. & H. R. I. / April 4, 1889”

To Armistead Borland, in a second autograph album signed by Claverack classmates: “Ah! Tommie! when you / get back to Dixie, remember / how often you used to / be fired out of #117 and / how you always came / directly in again / Your sincere friend / Stephen Crane / CC&HR.I / March 10, 1890”

To Lucius L. Button, in a copy of “A Souvenir and a Medley: Seven Poems and a Sketch” (*The Roycroft Quarterly*, May 1896), on the title page, in pencil: “Go to hell! / C.”

To Camilla Ingalls, in a copy of *Pictures of War* (London: William Heinemann, 1898), on the front free endpaper, in ink: "To Camilla / With affectionate, always / affectionate, remembrances / of the author. / Stephen Crane / Brede Place / June 8, 1899."

To Mrs. Edward Pease, in a copy of *The Monster and Other Stories* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1899), on the preliminary leaf, in ink: "Dear Mrs Pease: I am rejoicing / in the Russian raiment and I / am sure nobody but you could / have thought of it. It is the / very kind of thing I like. A / long 20th Century to you and / yours. / Stephen Crane / Brede Place / Jan 4, 1900"

To Charles J. Pike, on the cover of a copy of *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* [New York, 1893], in ink: "To my friend / Charles J. Pike / Stephen Crane. / May 10th, 1896." The title MAGGIE is set off top and bottom by wavy rule in the same ink as the inscription. The typeset "By / JOHNSTON SMITH / Copyrighted" is followed by the holograph signature "Stephen Crane." Laid in this volume is Charles J. Pike's memorandum, dated at Clinton, Conn., 1 April 1930, "How I came into possession of my copy of 'Maggie' (1st edition) by Stephen Crane".

To Charles F. Pope, in a copy of *The Red Badge of Courage* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), on the preliminary leaf, in ink: "To Charles F. Pope / With the regards of / Stephen Crane / Jacksonville, Fla., Jan. 8, 1897."

To Louis C. Senger, Jr., in a copy of *Maggie das Strassenkind* (Leipzig: Georg H. Wigand's Verlag, 1897), on the title page, in pencil: "Dear Louis: / Have this from / S.C."

To J. G. Widrig, in a copy of *The Little Regiment, and Other Episodes of the American Civil War* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), on the front free endpaper, in pencil: "To my friend / J. G. Widrig / (USS Scorpion) / From Stephen Crane / Havana / Nov 24 / 1898."

In a copy of *George's Mother* (London and New York: Edward Arnold, 1896), on the title page, in ink: "Stephen Crane / June 6, 1899."

In a copy of *The Red Badge of Courage* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), on the title page, in ink: "Stephen Crane"

In a copy of *War Is Kind* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1899), annotations possibly by Stephen Crane in ink on page [8] and in red pencil on pages 69, 70, 71, 77, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 95, and 96; annotations possibly by Cora Crane in blue pencil on pages 22 and 45; and erasures on pages [8], 25, and [79].

On the mount, verso, of a photograph of Claverack College, in ink, undated: "A place around which tender(?) memories cling."

On the mount of a photograph of Crane, taken by Corwin Knapp Linson in 1894 and pasted inside the front cover of Linson's annotated copy of Thomas Beer's *Stephen Crane: A Study in American Letters* (1923), in ink: "Always yours / Stephen Crane / April 17, 94"

On a half-sheet of folded stationery, now tipped in John S. Mayfield's copy of *The Little Regiment and Other Episodes of the American Civil War* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), in ink: "May you never lack autographs. / Stephen Crane."

On a half-sheet of unprinted stationery, in ink: "May . 1900 / Brede Place / Sussex / England / To / My wife / Stephen Crane". Cora Crane enclosed this dedication inscription in her letter of Sunday [probably 20 May 1900] to James Pinker saying "Mr. Crane wants this dedication put in 'The O'Ruddy' book. He wants it dated from Brede Place." Crane's novel *The O'Ruddy* was unfinished at his death on 5 June 1900; completed by Robert Barr, it carried no dedication when it was published in 1903.

BOOKS FROM CRANE'S LIBRARY

A partial reconstruction of Crane's library is possible from the book inventories that Cora Crane prepared, but the "Crane library must be a Platonic concept because the Cranes moved so frequently". [See James E. Kibler, Jr., "The Library of Stephen and Cora Crane" in *Proof: The Yearbook of American Bibliographical and Textual Studies* 1

(1971): 199–246. A check of the titles in Kibler's list, pp. 227–43, "Cora Crane's List of Books Brede Place" against Syracuse University's library holdings has uncovered no books formerly owned by Crane other than those listed below.] Many of the books are lost, in part because Cora's effects—including a lot of 176 books—were auctioned on the steps of the Duval County courthouse in Jacksonville in 1911.

Surprisingly, no record has been found to date that Stephen Crane presented any books to Syracuse University. Still, the library is fortunate to hold a number of books that were once in his possession—and a much larger quantity of books that belonged to his family. These latter books, mostly from Peck family libraries to which Crane might have had access, are summarized under "Gifts of the Peck and Crane Families". Books formerly owned by Crane (none of them with marginalia by him) are the following:

Crane, Stephen. *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. [New York, 1893]. This copy of the 1893 *Maggie* was once Crane's own, according to Charles J. Pike's memorandum, which accompanies the volume:

How I came into possession of my copy of "Maggie" (1st edition) by Stephen Crane.

I knew Crane intimately. He lived for eighteen months or more with me, in my studio on the third floor front of the old building that stood just where the Sachs building now stands—on the corner of 33rd St. and 6th Ave New York. My copy of "Maggie" was Stephen Crane's own personal signed copy, which he occasionally opened. He had promised to give me a copy of "Maggie," but being unable to find a new one, he ultimately gave me his own—after he had inscribed it, and drawn the two wavy lines on the front cover. . . . Although I cannot prove it, I have always believed that this copy of "Maggie" was the last (1st edition) Stephen Crane ever owned and used personally.

April 1st 1930. Charles J. Pike. Clinton Conn.

Lamb, Charles. *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*. (Boston: Privately printed for Herbert Copeland and F. H. Day and their friends, Christmas, 1894). Signed in pencil "Stephen Crane" on the front wrapper. The firm of Copeland and Day, which held the manuscript

of Crane's first volume of poetry during much of 1894, finally published *The Black Riders* in May 1895.

Ryan, Marah Ellis. *Told in the Hills*. (Chicago and New York: Rand, McNally & Co., 1891). Title page and half-title are supplied in photocopy. Pasted on the dedication page is an oversized signature "Stephen Crane.", clipped from the front wrapper of the *University Herald*, a student publication at Syracuse University, undated but presumably 1891, and showing its decorative border. Written on the dedication page in an unidentified hand: "Property / of / Stephen Crane. [monogram combining the letters Δ and Υ] / Ex-Syracuse-'94. / Author of 'Red Badge of Courage'." Gift of Carl E. Dorr.

GIFTS OF THE PECK AND CRANE FAMILIES

In four generations, Stephen Crane's family presented books and family memorabilia to the university of which his granduncle, the Methodist Episcopal bishop Jesse Truesdell Peck, had been a founder and early benefactor. Bishop Peck's immediate family counted at least seven authors with more than fifty separately published titles; and, of course, both of Crane's parents wrote extensively, contributing especially to the religious press. This family literary heritage is documented by these gifts.

Books from the library of Crane's uncle, George Myers Peck (1820–1897), arrived at Syracuse University in September 1900 and can still be identified in the general book stacks by their memorial bookplate as "part of the Library of Rev. Geo. M. Peck, who died at Scranton, Pa., February 16, 1897, and . . . presented by his son, Wm. H. Peck". Also in 1900, William J. Peck, Syracuse 1896, presented books for a Peck Alcove in the library as a memorial to Jesse Truesdell Peck, his grandfather. In 1959, Crane's niece, Edith Fleming Crane, presented two items of her grandfather, the Reverend Jonathan Townley Crane: the printed sermon *Christian Duty in regard to American Slavery* and an anonymous, undated oil portrait. In 1961, a gift by Mrs. William Joseph Peck of 256 selected books included two literary efforts of Crane's uncle, Luther Wesley Peck (1825–1900), *The Golden Age* (New York: E. Goodenough [1858]) and *The Flight of the Humming Birds: A Poem* (New York: Hunt & Eaton; Cincinnati: Cranston & Curtis, 1895), the Peck family Bible, and

presentation copies of Jonathan Townley Crane's books to his father-in-law, the Reverend George Peck (1797–1876). With this gift came books from the Crane family library, including a copy of Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *Poems* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1865), signed on the title page by Crane's brother and sister "Wilbur F. Crane / Dec 27/89" and "Agnes E. Crane". These gifts were supplemented by the purchase in 1972 of the papers of the Reverend George Peck.

MEMORABILIA AND OTHER MISCELLANEA

Syracuse's collection of legal documents, memorabilia, photographs, and reminiscences of Crane has been considerably strengthened by the holdings of the Schoberlin Collection and now numbers nearly one hundred items. Photographs by Corwin Knapp Linson and photographs of Cora Crane join holdings in the Ames W. Williams Collection and individual gifts by George Arents. Itemized lists of holdings are available in the library.

OTHER COLLECTIONS

Day, Cyrus Lawrence (1900–1968). Research notes on the sinking of the *Commodore*, assembled in the preparation of his article "Stephen Crane and the Ten-foot Dinghy" in *Boston University Studies in English* 3 (Winter 1957): 193–213. Gift of Mrs. Cyrus L. Day, 1982.

Flack, Alonzo (1823–1885). Lectures on various subjects, approximately 425 pages, n.d., with other papers, ca. 1878. Flack was president of Claverack College and Hudson River Institute. Gift of Alonzo Flack II, 1934.

French, Mansfield Joseph (1872–1953). Papers, 1893–1952, of a Syracuse University classmate of Crane and the pitcher on the 1891 baseball team. Gift of Mrs. Mansfield J. French, 1957. A gift by Mansfield J. French in 1952 included letters exchanged with classmates giving their recollections of Crane; a photograph of the 1891 Syracuse University baseball team; and the baseball used in the 1891 game with Hobart College.

Gilkes, Lillian Barnard (1902–1977). Papers, 1922–66, including correspondence files and research notes for her *Cora Crane: A Biography of Mrs. Stephen Crane* (1960). Other files relate to her editing with R. W. Stallman of *Stephen Crane: Letters* (1960). Gift of Lillian B. Gilkes, 1965.

Herzberg, Max John (1886–1958). Correspondence, 1921–30, with Crane admirers. Herzberg was president, 1924–30, of the Stephen Crane Association, Newark, N.J. Acquired with the Melvin H. Schoberlin Collection, 1984.

Jones, Claude Edward (b. 1907). Correspondence, 1932, in the form of questionnaires returned by Crane's classmates at Syracuse University for the preparation of Jones's article "Stephen Crane at Syracuse" in *American Literature* 7 (March 1935): 82–84. Acquired, in part, with the Melvin H. Schoberlin Collection, 1984.

Linson, Corwin Knapp (1864–1959). "Stephen Crane: Memories and Appreciation" Successive drafts of Linson's memoir, published in 1958 as *My Stephen Crane*. Acquired, in part, with the Melvin H. Schoberlin Collection, 1984. Purchases from Corwin Linson in 1954 included his notes on sources used by Crane in *The Third Violet*; his annotated copy of Thomas Beer's biography; and Crane photographs.

Mayfield, John Simon (1904–1983). Correspondence, 1954–66, exchanged with Crane scholars, including Lillian B. Gilkes. John S. Mayfield was curator of rare books and manuscripts at Syracuse University, 1961–71.

Noxon, Frank Wright (1873–1945). Correspondence, 1926–40, exchanged with Crane admirers and contemporaries. Frank W. Noxon was a Delta Upsilon fraternity brother of Crane at Syracuse University.

Peck, George (1797–1876). Papers, 1820–76, including approximately 1000 incoming letters, with sermons and memorabilia. Peck, a Methodist Episcopal elder and editor, was the maternal grandfather of Stephen Crane. Correspondents include Jonathan Townley Crane, Jesse Truesdell Peck, and other members of the Peck family. Purchase, 1972.

Schoberlin, Melvin H. (1912–1977). Research files and correspondence, 1932–50, assembled in the preparation of his unpublished biography “Flagon of Despair: Stephen Crane”; with later correspondence to 1974. Successive drafts of “Flagon of Despair” and the final typescript (1950) of sections 1–3 in thirteen chapters, 392 pages total, but without the final chapter, “The Price of the Harness”, which is available only in draft form. Collection of sixty-two Stephen Crane letters and seven manuscripts, with thirty-nine letters of Cora Crane, and documents, photographs, and family memorabilia. (Total 9 linear feet.) Also, Melvin H. Schoberlin’s book collection of Crane first editions, presentation copies, later editions, and secondary works. Purchase, 1984.

Starrett, Vincent (1886–1974). Correspondence, 1922–43, exchanged with Crane admirers and contemporaries. Acquired, in part, with the Ames W. Williams Collection, 1950.

Williams, Ames William. Correspondence, 1940–45, exchanged in his preparation of *Stephen Crane: A Bibliography* (1948). Acquired with the Ames W. Williams Collection, 1950.