



The Historical  
Society of  
Pennsylvania

**Collection 2172**

**Clapp family  
Papers, 1942-1989**

**23 boxes, 33 lin. feet**

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**Abstract**

Both Richard Clapp (1911-1999) and Mary Ann Hazzard (1916-2001) were born in Pennsylvania and married in 1942. After a brief move to Washington State, they settled in Haverford, Pennsylvania, in 1973. Their two children, Hank and Julie, were adopted in the early 1960s. Richard Clapp was an engineer for Philco. Corporation, while Mary Ann stayed at home to raise the children. The Clapps traveled extensively and entertained well into their retired years. Toward the end of the series in the 1980s, Hank received his Bachelor's and then Master's degree, and later married Lisa Pizzo, while Julie eloped with her boyfriend Tom. The collection ends in 1989, shortly after Mary Ann and Richard Clapp celebrated their 47<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

The Clapp Family Papers consist of forty-two scrapbooks and thirteen diaries dating from 1942 to 1989. Both the scrapbooks and the diaries, kept mostly by Mary Ann Clapp, contain detailed accounts of the family's day-to-day life. Mrs. Clapp saved nearly every bit of family-related ephemera that passed through her hands, including holiday cards, vacation itineraries, notes, shopping lists, and programs. Scrapbooks feature souvenirs for each day of the year, including leaves from the yard, greeting cards, and candles from birthday cakes. Each item was carefully duct-taped onto the pages.

**Background note**

Richard Clapp, born on March 3, 1911, in Pennsylvania, graduated from Swarthmore High School in 1927. In 1932, he received his engineering degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Mary Ann Hazzard was born March 11, 1916, in Pennsylvania, and attended the Mary Lyon School for Girls in Swarthmore. Richard and Mary Ann Clapp were married in 1942, living first in the Philadelphia area, then near Seattle, Washington, finally returning to Haverford, Pennsylvania, in 1973. Richard Clapp was a radio engineer for the Philco Corporation; Mary Ann was a housewife who spent her time with various civic and social women's groups.

The Clapps enjoyed traveling, entertaining friends, and celebrating holidays with their family. In the 1960s, Richard and Mary Ann adopted two children, Hank and Julie. Hank Clapp graduated from Widener University in 1983, and received his Master's

degree from Villanova in 1986. In 1987, he married Lisa Pizzo. Upon graduating from high school, Julie Clapp married for sweetheart Tom.

Richard Clapp died in 1999; Mary Ann died in 2001.

## **Scope & content**

This collection documents the life of the Clapp family, beginning shortly after the marriage of Richard and Mary Ann Clapp in 1942. It contains diaries and scrapbooks, mostly written and arranged by Mary Ann Clapp. She recorded the life of her family by attaching nearly every important artifact of the family's life to these scrapbooks, such as love letters, holiday ephemera, invitations, and photographs. Mrs. Clapp also included a number of unconventional items in her scrapbooks, which she called "memory books," such as birthday candles, champagne bottle corks, cigarette packs, banknotes, a turkey wishbone, and even a letter to then-president Nixon from Mrs. Clapp's brother, outlining his ideas regarding Cuba and American foreign policy. Clearly, Mrs. Clapp was very enthusiastic about her memory books, as duct-taped items crowd the pages, with every part of the Clapps' life arranged in great detail. This collection is a unique and intimate portrait of family life from the 1940s to the 1980s.

The first several boxes contain mostly pictures, postcards, and journals documenting the Clapps' early married life and travels. Before marrying Mary Ann, Dick Clapp attended the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1931. Later, he worked as a radio engineer for the Philco Corporation. Starting shortly after they were married, the Clapps journeyed across the continental United States, from Cape Cod to San Francisco, and nearly everywhere in between. Later, they vacationed in Jamaica, some Caribbean islands, and then across Europe. Towards the end of their traveling years, points of interest included the adoption of their children, starting with their son, Hank, adopted in 1960, and their daughter Julie's adoption in 1963. Box 11 details the family's 1967 move across country from Pennsylvania to Washington State, near Seattle. The family returned to Haverford, Pennsylvania, in 1973.

Scrapbooks from the 1970s show the family settling into their suburban Philadelphia home, putting their two children through high school and college. Mrs. Clapp used the family's kitchen calendar when writing the diaries, so a common element to these journals is scrupulous attention to chronological detail. Nearly every purchase the family made, from birthday gifts to new telephones, was recorded. All important and semi-important dates were recorded as well, and Mrs. Clapp was so attentive that it seems no anniversary or obligation on her calendar went unnoticed.

The early 1980s brought many changes to the Clapp family. Upon graduating high school, daughter Julie immediately, and apparently without warning, left home to live with her boyfriend Tom. This turn of events reveals some new things about the family, such as their devout Christianity. In letters to their estranged daughter, they recommend a reading list which included *The Ten Commandments* and *The Lord's Prayer*. The family wished for their daughter to move home and begin college or a job, both of which

she had apparently abandoned to be with Tom. The couple eventually married in May, 1982. In May of the following year, Hank graduated from Widener University.

The last few scrapbooks in the collection are from the late 1980s, and describe Mary Ann and Dick's settlement into their retired life. In May 1986, their son Hank received his master's degree from Villanova University, and then in September of the following year, married Lisa Pizzo. With an empty nest for the first time since the adoption of their children, Mary Ann and Dick were not without amusements. They continued to throw holiday parties, take vacations, and try new hobbies. Their dog, Romulus, was a champion in the Valley Forge Kennel Club dog shows. Mary Ann even attempted to write a novel, entitled *Daughter Dearest*, presumably about her experience with Julie. However, it appears to have been too costly to publish. The memory books end abruptly with Box 21, following the Clapps' 47<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. The diaries for the memory books dated 1980-1989 are contained in Box 22.

## Separation report

None.

## Subjects

Domestic relations – 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Family life – Pennsylvania – 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Home economics – Accounting  
Housekeeping  
Housewives – 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Pennsylvania – Social life and customs – 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Suburban life – Pennsylvania  
Women – Pennsylvania – Social life and customs

Clapp, Julie  
Clapp, Hank  
Clapp, Mary Ann, 1916-2001  
Clapp, Richard, 1911-1999

Philco Corporation

## **Administrative Information**

### **Restrictions**

The collection is open for research.

### **Acquisition information**

Provenance unknown.

### **Alternative format**

None.

### **Preferred citation**

Cite as: [Indicate cited item here], Clapp Family Papers (Collection 2172), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

### **Processing note**

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## Inventory

Volume title	Date	Box
Scrapbook (Diary attached)	Sep 1942- June 1943	1
Scrapbook	June 1943-Feb 1944	1
Diary	Feb 1943-June 1943	1
Diary	June 1943-Feb 1944	1
Diary	Mar 1944-June 1945	1A
Scrapbook	March 1944	1A
Diary	June 1945-July 1946	2
Scrapbook	June 1945- July 1946	2
Diary	July 1946- July 1947	2
Scrapbook	July 1946-Nov 1947	2
Diary (and Vacation Itinerary)	July-Aug 1947	3
Scrapbook	1947 Vacation	3
Scrapbook	Sept 1947-Dec 1948	3
Diary	Feb 1949- Jan 1951	4
Scrapbook	July-Aug 1948	4
Scrapbook	Jan 1949-1950	4
Scrapbook	1950 Vacation	5
Scrapbook	Dec 1950- Sep 1951	5
Scrapbook	1951 Vacation	5
Scrapbook	1951 Vacation	5
Scrapbook	Mar 1951-June 1952	5
Scrapbook	Feb 1953-Aug 1954	6
Scrapbook	Aug 1954-June 1955	6
Scrapbook	Feb 1955	6
Scrapbook	June 1955-Dec 1956	6
Scrapbook	July 1956	7
Scrapbook	Jan 1957-Jan 1959	7
Scrapbook	July-August 1957	7
Scrapbook	Jan 1959-Jan 1960	8
Scrapbook	Jan 1960-July 1961	8
Scrapbook	July 1961-May 1962	9
Scrapbook	May 1962-Dec 1963	9
Scrapbook	Jan. 1964-Mar. 1965	10
Scrapbook	Mar. 1965-Feb. 1966	10
Scrapbook	Feb. 1966-Oct. 1967	11
Scrapbook	Oct. 1967-Jan. 1969	11
Scrapbook	Jan. 1969-Jan. 1971	12
Scrapbook	Jan. 1971-April 1973	13

Scrapbook	Apr. 1973-Oct. 1974	14
Scrapbook	Oct. 1974-Feb. 1977	15
Scrapbook	Feb 1977-May 1978	16
Diary	May 1978-July 1979	17
Scrapbook	May 1978-Feb 1981	17
Diary	July 1979-Sept. 1980	17
Scrapbook	Mar 1981-June 1983	18
Scrapbook	May 1983-Dec. 1984	19
Scrapbook	Dec 1984-Nov 1985	19
Scrapbook	Nov 1985-Dec 1986	20
Scrapbook	Dec 1986-Nov 1987	20
Scrapbook	Dec 1987-Aug 1988	21
Scrapbook	Aug 1988-June 1989	21
Diary	Sept 1980-Dec 1981	22
Diary	Dec 1981-June 1983	22
Diary	July 1984-Nov 1987	22
Diary	Nov 1987-June 1989	22