

1881

331 letters
17 cards

A group of letters from Thomas L. Kane and Elisha Kane, pertaining to railroad matters and political matters in the State.

Unusual letterheads:

Rowle, Noble & Co; Charcoal, Pig Iron, Erie, Pa. (This was my first knowledge that Orange Noble, famed early oil producer, was in this type of business in later life.)
McKean & Buffalo Railroad Company.

Postcards: one postmarked Shullsburgh, Wis., Feb 8, 1881.
Unusual cancellation.

1881

88 letter
37 cards 33

Of special interest:

Complete list of timber required for building an oil rig with price for entire needs quoted.

Autograph of Jno. (sic) Eaton, as President of the Oil Well Supply Co, Bradford, Pa. January 27, 1881.

Emlenton Oil Co, Bradford, Pa. January 27, 1881. Offering to sell the timber on their oil lands (demonstrating another source of income for early oil companies.)

Unusual oil letterheads of:

Forest Oil Company, Bradford, Pa.

Union Oil Co, Titusville, Pa.

Tide Water Pipe Co Ltd, Titusville, Pa.

Bradford Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.

Melvin, Walker & Co, Crude Petroleum, Bradford, Pa.

Other unusual letterheads:

American Hydro Carbon Gas Co, Bradford, Pa. Illustrates equipment of a technical nature.

Screw Stump Machine Co, Olean, N. Y. Illustrates stump pulling equipment.

Grandin Brothers, Banking, Tidioute, Pa. Famous oil and lumber and banking family for generations.

Olean, Bradford & Warren and Kendall and Eldred Railroad; a call for 20% of the subscriptions.

Confidential letter regarding plans discovered of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Company.

1882

573 letters
24 cards

Of special interest:

Letter of some length signed personally by Thomas L. Kane, General Kane of Civil War fame, friend of Grant's, founder of the town of Kane, Pa.

Two letters signed by Honorable Lewis F. Watson, Congressman, of Warren, Pa. Famed lumber and oil tycoon for whom Watson Township, Warren County, was named.

Letter 486 is a powerful political letter signed by Thomas L. Kane.

Letters and telegrams from Orange Nobel (Noble, correct) as President of the Keystone National Bank, Erie, Pa. He was the owner of the famed Noble & Delamater oil well from which he made a great fortune.

Letters and documents from the famous F. H. Goodyear Company, Buffalo, N.Y. important factors in hemlock lumbering in all of Pennsylvania.

A letter asking how the flight of passenger pigeons were; the writer thought he might come to the Smethport area for some shooting.

Letterheads of interest:

Couderport & Port Allegany Railroad Company.
W. D. & C Watch Glasses Company.
New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Co.
Jersey Shore, Pine Creek & Buffalo Railroad Co.
United Pipe Line Co, Bradford, Pa.
Duke & Norton Oil Co., Allentown, N. Y.

A group of various letters indicate the lowest prices paid by the larger lumber interests at this time was \$10-\$12 an acre for poor hemlock and to \$15.-\$17.50 for better graded hemlock. Some owners refused \$25 an acre for their holdings.

1883

398 letters
19 cards 20

Of special interest:

A postcard dated September 24, 1883, circular stamping showing name of H. Hagerty, P.M., date, Ridgway, Pa. Perfect black matching star cancels postcard in exact center of stamp.

A strong letter from Thomas L. Kane dated February 8, 1883 to Byron Hamlin stating he has recommended to Governor Pattison that he appoint Hamlin to the McKean judgeship.

There are five letters from B. G. Morrison from Cornplanter, Pa. Morrison was one of the early settlers and lumberman from the Kinzua area.

A letter from Elisha Kent Kane to Byron Hamlin stating that he has had the influential Swedes in the area sign the petition for a railroad from Mt. Jewett to Clermont.

Letterheads of interest:

S.F. Eagon, Rectifier and Wholesale Dealer for fine Whiskies, Buffalo, N. Y.

Enterprise Transit Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Enterprise Transit Co, Bradford, Pa.

The Rock Bottom Store, Kane, Pa.

Jersey Shore, Pine Creek & Buffalo Railway Co.

Duke Center Gas Co, Duke Center, Pa.

Oleona House, Oleona, Pa. (Site of Ole Bull's Pa. settlement.)

1884

450 letters

5 cards

Of special interest:

A letter from Elisha Kent Kane to Byron Hamlin February 27, 1884 explaining how he thinks the two of them should handle the railroad viewers coming to determine right of way values. Kane even proposes who should be seen first so to better his position, suggests buggies, and proper care of the party in Kane during that evening.

Letterheads of interest:

H. J. Baker & Brother; Castor Oil, Crystal & AA. 215 Pearl St, New York, N. Y.
Merchants National Bank, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Lazarus Moyer (Dave Jones' Kentucky Bourbon) 223 North 3rd St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Chapel & Hickok; Rig Timber, Lath and Hemlock Lumber. Myrtle, Pa.
The Monongahela House, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Tide Water Pipe Co Ltd, Bradford, Pa.
Car Wheel Iron Co Ltd., Philadelphia.
Diamond Emery Wheel & Machine Co, Providence, R. I.
Smethport Gas Co, April 1, 1884, Smethport, Pa. Yellow bill for gas.

1885

446 letters
1 card - 2

Of special interest:

Receipt from United Pipe Lines to Eugenie Hamlin covering 235½ barrels of oil they received (and which on same she will later pay pipage.)

Mr. F. W. Knox of Coudersport writes Hamlin that cows must be kept off the streets summers and winters and asks Hamlin to make him an offer for some pasture land he owns outside of Coudersport.

All during this year money was very tight; there are many many letters asking for extension of times in paying legal debts and for timberland. Some clients ask Hamlin's to loan them additional sums until they can collect some of their debts.

Letterheads of interest:

Alleghany Lumber Co, Olean, N. Y.

Foreign and American Granite, Manchester Depot, Vermont.

United Pipe Lines Division of National Transit Co, Bradford, Pa.

Farrar & Trefts Boiler Machine Works, Buffalo, N. Y.

E. D. Morse; French Draft Horses. Kewanna, Indiana.

Sinnemahoning Valley Railroad Co, Buffalo, N. Y.

Bald Eagle Valley Railroad Co, Lock Haven, Pa.

Bradford Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.

1886

392 letters
2 cards

Of special interest:

Printed reports of the First National Bank, Bradford, Pa.

Letter from C. D. Munroe, Dunkirk, N. Y. dated January 18, 1886 relating to the Kane oil excitement.

Bill from W. F. Pratt, Buffalo, N. Y. to Mr. Byron Hamlin for one beaver robe for \$100.

Letter asking for title abstracts dated April 3, 1886 from Eldred, Pa. relating to the oil excitement in that area.

Letterheads of interest:

Folding Iron Grate and Guard Co, Buffalo, N. Y.

Holgate Bros., Kane, Pa.

Bradford Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.

P. C. West, Producer and Dealer in Crude Petroleum, Kendall Creek, Pa.

A special 4-in-1 letterhead carrying names of following railroads:

Erie Narrow Gauge System

Bradford, Bordell and Kinzua Railroad Co

Bradford, Eldred and Cuba Railroad Co

John J. Carter, President.

In purple ink.

1887

384⁵ letters
4 cards.

Of special interest:

A letter from the famous Orange Noble, in his hand writing, as President of the Keystone National Bank, Erie, Pa. January 7, 1887 asking Hamlin how he should conduct himself and about other testimony in a coming trial.

Various letters (five) from F. H. Goodyear Lumber Co, Buffalo, N. Y. indicate Goodyear's borrowed from Hamlin for large lumber purchases, sometimes as much as \$85,000 at a time. Interest was generally 6% but there could have been other considerations.

Letterheads of interest:

Revere House, Warren, Pa.

Haddon Hall Hotel, Atlantic City, N. J. With an unusual area map printed on the reverse.

Johanson Graphite Lubricating Co, Rochester, N. Y.

Buffalo Hardware Co, Austin, Pa. (with a branch at Freeman's Run, the stream causing the breaking of the Austin dam and the great flood there.)

1888

372 letters
1 card

Of special interest:

Olean Board of Trade; a full 8½ x 11" map in detail showing lumber and oil lands with descriptive details.

Also lengthy letter and list of tax sale lands in McKean County which the Enterprise Transit Company plans to bid in and clear title to at the next tax sale.

Statement of income, earnings, costs, etc., of the Countersport & Port Allegany Railroad Company.

Balance Blank receipt, number of barrels of oil, issues by the National Transit Company.

Letterheads of interest:

Allegany Lumber Co Ltd., Olean, N.Y.

Chester Pipe & Tool Co, Philadelphia, Pa.

Democratic County Committee, Bradford, Pa.

Fifth Avenue Hotel, Madison Square, New York, N. Y.

Major, Knapp & Co, Lithographing, New York, N. Y.

McKean County Miner (newspaper), Smethport, Pa.

Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Pennsylvania Company, Philadelphia, Pa.

Penn Refining Co, Ltd., Oil City, Pa.

1889

450 letters

2 cards

Of special interest:

A long letter from B. C. Harrington, Indian Creek (Mc Kean County), Pa. dated May 27 in which he explains the plight of the small oil producers, lease situations, and asks Hamlin's for a change in the oil royalty. Typical of the situation small and marginal producers found themselves in when crude oil price was low.

Letterheads of interest:

American Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.

Johnsonburg Railroad Co, Philadelphia, Pa.

Hotel Look Off, Sugar Hill, N. H.

Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad Co, Turtle Point, Pa.

1890

382 letters
3 cards

Of special interest:

Letters indicating due to an open winter, money is short for payments again. There is considerable discussion concerning oil royalties.

A "Private" letter from F. H. Goodyear to B. D. Hamlin pertains to hemlock lands stretching (#165) bonds and mortgages, etc. (#188)

Letterheads of interest:

Artistic Wood Workers, Buffalo, N. Y.

Olean Cart Co, Olean, N. Y.

Taylor & Torrey, Oil Producers, Oil City, Pa.

Theo. S. Wilkins Sam Mill Machinery, Milwaukee, Wisc.

1891

407 letters
2 cards

Of special interest:

I am more and more impressed by the large amounts of money loaned by the Hamlin Bank and the Hamlin's to a wide range of peoples. This is apparent in many letters. Also Laravee & Lines of Coudersport, Pa. write Hamlin's January 17, 1891 saying they have plenty of gas to sell, asking for a deed in exchange for \$10,000 in stock, and stating they are supplying Tidewater.

The leather trade has been a failure in making money at this time. (#180)

Letterheads of interest:

Fall Branch Coat Co, Ltd., Buffalo, N. Y.

Mt. Jewett, Kinzua & Riterville Railroad Co., Kane, Pa. (#62)

Stoneham Tannery, Stoneham (Warren County), Pa.

United Lumber Co Ltd, Buffalo, N. Y.

1892

359 letters
1 card

Of special interest:

Goodyear Lumber Company seeks advice and guidance from Hamlin's on oil and gas royalties and how they should be handled as they report that are not aware of the proper means.

E. K. Kane requests oil royalty from Hamlin's and will pay 8% interest on his loan to them for an extension period.

Buffalo School Furniture Co, Buffalo, N.Y. wants to borrow \$80,000 from Hamlin; showing their very wide range of interest and the funds they apparently had available.

List of mortgages against Elisha K. Kane. (#129)

Letterheads of interest:

A. E. Perren & Co, Fine Carriages and Sleighs, Buffalo, N. Y.

C. W. Scofield, Oil Producer, Jamestown, New York.

South Penn Oil Co., Bradford, Pa.

Tidal Oil Co., Jamestown, N. Y.

Joseph Seep, Oil City, Pa.

Addition:

Thomas E. Proctor Leather Co., Boston, warns "Watch dealings with Kane." (#162) A surprise as the Kane family were always thought of as wealthy, honest, upright et al.

An original letter signed by Joseph Seep, famed crude buyer for Standard Oil Company, December 3, 1892. (#328)

1893

338 letters
1 trade card

Of special interest:

Bovaird & Seyfang Mfg. Co., Bradford, Pa., write Hamlin that during 1892 they made more than the 7% which they had guaranteed Hamlin as dividends but had decided not to declare a dividend at this time. However, if Hamlin wish their 7% dividends they will be pleased to send the same.

C. W. Goodyear of the Goodyear Lumber Company send free passes on their rail lines to Henry Hamlin and immediate family in Smethport. (#15)

Standard Oil Company, represented by Joseph Bushnell, tells Hamlin's the claim settlement is most satisfactory. (#27)

Goodyear Lumber Company write Hamlin and says they did not understand that their loan of \$100,000 was to be repaid in gold coins and what can be done about it? (#76)

Elisha Kent Kane and Thomas L. Kane write Hamlin's about their inability for repayment of some loans as due and request extensions.

Letterheads of interest:

Benkert & Co., Boots and Shoes, Philadelphia.

F. L. Buckley, Inventor of the Perfection Washer, Olean, N. Y.

Manhattan Oil Co., Bradford, Pa. (#51) L. E. Mallory original letter. (Withdraws daughter from private school because of bills he considers unfair!)

Producers Consolidated Land and Petroleum Co., Bradford, Pa. (#44)

Asking Hamlin to employ some "Christian virtues" and reduce the interest and the repayment schedule.

Ceres Cycle Co., High Grade Bicycles, Ceres, N. Y.

1894

330 letters
2 cards

Of special interest:

Letters indicate great lack of available funds again; all payments slow.

Treasurer's Office receipt, Smethport, Pa., June 25, 1894 to Jerry Crary, Warren, Pa., famed lumber and oil multi-millionaire.

Letterheads of interest:

L. Martin & Co., Largest Lamp Black Works in the World, Philadelphia, Pa. (#24)

Le Moat Chemical Works, Kane, Pa.

Merrill Railway and Lighting Co., Merrill, Wisc. (Make street cars et al.)

1895

361 letters

Of special interest:

E. K. Kane in financial trouble with the Hamlin's again. (#58)

Manufacturers and Traders Bank, Buffalo, will pay Hamlin's now 4% for deposit money for \$50-\$100,000 sum. Conitions stated in their letter. (#65)

F. N. Fosmer, Roulette, Pa., castigates Hamlin interests for taking unfair advantage of him in a tax situation. Red ink. (#95)

Commissioners of Potter County, Coundersport, Pa., ask B.D.Hamlin to loan them \$100,000 at 4½% for a five year period.

Letter from Governor of the State of Idaho, Boise City. Signed by W. J. McConnell, Governor. He wants to sell some timber lands.

Letterheads of interest:

Eastern Oil Co., Buffalo, N. Y. B. N. McCoy Gear Co, Kane, Pa.

Penn Tanning Co., Warren, Pa. (Signed the famous Jerry Crary!)

Penn Refining Co Ltd, Oil City, (#300) signed by the famous Henry Suhr, later President of Pennzoil Company and doubtless the leading figure in the formation of the original Pennzoil group.

1896

325 letters
2 cards

Of special interest:

Coudersport & Port Allegany Railroad Company letter to all stockholders gives details of consolidation with the Coudersport & Pine Creek Railroad. (#45)

Elisha K. Kane requests over the year eight extensions against the payment of his notes to Hamlin. One check he gave as payment was returned because of lack of funds.

United States Smetling Co., Philadelpiha, wants to borrow money from the Hamlin interests. (#268)

Letter of interest:

The Texas & Pacific Railway Co., Dallas, Texas.

1897

239 letters

Of special interest:

Coudersport and Port Allegany Railroad Company; troubles with rail schedules, lay-over points, etc. Four long pages answering complaints of Hamlin.

Board of Trade, Coudersport, Pa. asks a \$5000 loan from the Hamlin's for a local industry.

Lackawanna Lumber Co. is in financial trouble and ask Hamlin's to help them out. (#89) They do so. (#95)

Elisha K. Kane asks that his notes be extended due to shortage of funds. (#178)

Elisha K. Kane tells of the "growth of my livestock" with the arrival of a daughter Harriet Griselda Kane.

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1898

249 letters

Of special interest:

Allegheny College, William N. Crawford, President, asking for funds. (#36)

Frank A. Deans, President., Columbia and Hartford Bicycles, Wellsborough, Pa. write to John Forrest (of Hamlin and Forrest law firm) relative to the old baseball club they played on together in the 1870's known as the "Unknown Baseball Club of Fall Brooks." Interesting personal letter with baseball stories et al.

W. O. Hamlin writes from New York City to Byron Hamlin, his uncles. Tells him he is forming a firm to export goods into Cuba; 250 shares of stock at \$100 a share and he would be pleased to sell him a few shares. Byron purchases one share for \$100! The company never did come into being.

Allegheny College, William N. Crawford, President, proposes 15 men each contribute \$100 or \$200 for the establishment and payment of one or two professorships. Hamlin, who went to Allegheny College, sends \$100.

Letterheads of special interest:

New York and Pennsylvania Telephone and Telegraph Co. (#38)

1899

274 letters
1 card

Of special interest:

Elisha Kent Kane renews his note twice this year.

Byron Hamlin loans his nephew in New York \$250 and the nephew asks for another \$250 loan.

Hamlin's invest \$100,000 in bonds of the Pittsburgh, Shamut & Northern Railroad Company (#72) and a few weeks later invest an additional \$100,000.

Letterheads of special interest:

Western New York Society for the Protection of Homeless and Dependent Children, Randolph, New York.

Buckeye Gas Co, Circleville, Ohio.

Standard Oil Company, 26 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

Gulf & Ship Island Railroad Co., Bradford, Pa.

1900

180 letters

Of special interest:

Elisha Kent Kane renews his notes with Hamlin's three times during this year

Letterheads of special interest:

Southern Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.

Thomas & Miller, Headstones, Quincy, Mass.

Northern Oil Co, Bradford, Pa.