

UNISA DOCUMENTATION CENTRE FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

**The C M Doke Collection of personal letters from
M K Gandhi, together with other related materials (1907 - 1970)**

Compiled by Marié Coetzee
and Mary-Lynn Suttie
2000

MK GANDHI (1869-1948)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi - often known by the title Mahatma or "*Great Soul*" - was born in India on 2 October 1869 and at the age of thirteen was married to Kasturbai Makanje (died 1944). Four sons, Harilal, Manilal, Ramdas and Devadas, were born of the marriage. Gandhi studied law in London and was called to the bar in 1891 and then entered the legal profession in India. On 30 January 1948, Gandhi was assassinated in Delhi by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu nationalist.

MK Gandhi in South Africa (1893-1914)

In 1893 Gandhi left for South Africa to act in a lawsuit between two Indian trading concerns. As a result of the suit, Gandhi had to travel to Pretoria. Although he had a first-class train ticket, a white passenger objected to his presence in the compartment on the grounds of race and railway officials asked him to use the third-class coach. When he refused, he was forcibly removed from the train and spent the night on the Pietermaritzburg station. This experience left an indelible impression on him and in later life he regarded it as the most important factor in determining his political life. Gandhi established a legal practice in Durban and in 1894 founded the *Natal Indian Congress*.

During the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) Gandhi formed an Indian Ambulance Corps of 1 100 men, for which he received a campaign medal. Gandhi was also responsible for the publication of the *Indian Opinion* newspaper from 1904-1914, and for most of the time he was the newspaper's editor. He founded the *Transvaal British Indian Association* through which various protests and grievances were directed at the government on behalf of the Indians. In 1906, Gandhi began to develop the idea of *satyagraha* ("keeping the truth"). This was the exercise of non-violent non-compliance with an offending law, enduring suffering or imprisonment if necessary but without ceasing to show respect to those who made the law or enforced it.

Gandhi's resistance campaign reached a climax with protests against the *Immigration Law of 1913* which prohibited further immigration by Indians to South Africa. Convinced of the power and nobility of *satyagraha*, Gandhi left South Africa in June 1914 to immerse himself in the Indian freedom struggle.

MK Gandhi CM Doke Collection of personal letters from MK Gandhi and related materials

The scrapbook containing the ***CM Doke Collection of personal letters from MK Gandhi and related materials***¹, was entrusted in 2000 to the Library of the University of South Africa (Unisa) by Dr Eunice Marion van den Aardweg, the daughter of Professor Clement Martyn Doke and the granddaughter of the well-known Baptist minister and first biographer of MK Gandhi, the Reverend Joseph John Doke.

The friendship between the Doke and Gandhi families began in February 1908 when JJ Doke offered to care for Gandhi at the Baptist manse after he had been severely assaulted and left unconscious by Pathan Indians on Von Brandis Square in Johannesburg. The militant group thought Gandhi and the resistance leaders had surrendered to the Transvaal Government by registering their fingerprints. Gandhi never forgot the love and kindness of the Doke family who nursed him. Always interested in helping the underprivileged, Doke became deeply concerned about the welfare of Indians in South Africa. In 1909 he published *MK Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa* with a foreword by Lord Ampthill. The biography was translated into several languages. From July to December 1909, Doke edited the weekly newspaper, *Indian Opinion*, which supported the battle for civil rights for the Indian community in South Africa.

The correspondence and printed materials in the Scrapbook reflect the friendship between the Gandhi and Doke families which spanned generations and decades.

1 For the electronic version of the records see <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/4668>

The materials in the *Collection* are described individually in the inventory. There are 27 items written by Gandhi, or on his behalf. Of these, 11 letters are written by Gandhi to Joseph Doke, seven letters (including a sympathy card and two letters on behalf of Gandhi) are to Clement Doke, and nine letters are to Olive Doke. Some of the letters are still in the original envelopes in which they were sent. The *Collection* also includes 10 letters to the Doke family by two of Gandhi's sons, Manilal and Ramdas. The other correspondence about Gandhi is from Lord Amthill, TL Schreiner, W Merriman, CS Shukla, B Kumarappa, B Britton, SD Raja Singam, K Roy and Peter Chafer.

The printed materials consist of cuttings or extracts from newspapers, journals and pamphlets. They contain interesting background information on Gandhi and his influence on politics in South Africa, India and Britain, and on the legacy of his philosophy of *satyagraha*, or non-violent resistance. The 75 printed items are divided into the following categories:

- MK Gandhi and the Doke family
- MK Gandhi's life and career (general)
- MK Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy
- Death of Kasturbai Gandhi
- Death of MK Gandhi
- Proposed television documentary on MK Gandhi's life
- Legacy of MK Gandhi

THE C M DOKE COLLECTION OF PERSONAL LETTERS FROM M K GANDHI, TOGETHER WITH OTHER RELATED MATERIALS (1907 - 1970)

1. Correspondence

1.1 Correspondence from MK Gandhi to JJ Doke

- 1.1.1 Note in pencil, with envelope, from MK Gandhi to JJ Doke about Gandhi's trust in God. Without date
- 1.1.2 Letter in pencil from MK Gandhi to JJ Doke from the "King Edward's Hotel", the name given by the local people to the Volksrust prison. 1908
- 1.1.3 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi to JJ Doke about his discussions in England with Lord Crewe and Mr Law with regard to Indian affairs in the Transvaal Colony. 24 Jul.1909
- 1.1.4 Handwritten note with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to JJ Doke about his negotiation strategy on behalf of the Indian population in South Africa. 14 Aug.1909
- 1.1.5 Handwritten note with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to JJ Doke thanking him for his dedication to the Indian struggle in South Africa. 28 Aug.1909
- 1.1.6 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to JJ Doke about passive resistance. 17 Sept.1909
- 1.1.7 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to JJ Doke about the Indian struggle in South Africa. 1 Nov.1909
- 1.1.8 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to JJ Doke about the latter's publication *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*, and Mr Ritch. 5 Nov.1909
- 1.1.9 Handwritten note with envelope from MK Gandhi (Johannesburg) to JJ Doke about a publication of Gandhi's. 21 Jan.1910
- 1.1.10 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (Johannesburg) to JJ Doke about a publication of Gandhi. 5 Feb.1910
- 1.1.11 Letter in pencil, with envelope marked "urgent", from MK Gandhi (Johannesburg) to JJ Doke about the Indian struggle in South Africa. 21 Feb.1910

1.2 Correspondence from MK Gandhi to CM Doke

- 1.2.1 Sympathy card from MK Gandhi to the Doke family. 1913
- 1.2.2 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (Phoenix, Natal) to Clement Doke about JJ Doke's publication. 12 Sept.1913
- 1.2.3 Handwritten letter from MK Gandhi (Phoenix, Natal) to Clement Doke about passive resisters, including his wife, in the Volksrust prison. 24 Sept.1913
- 1.2.4 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (India) to Clement Doke about Indian affairs and prayer. 13 Dec.1921
- 1.2.5 Handwritten note with envelope on behalf of MK Gandhi from Mira, to Dr and Mrs CM Doke about Gandhi's health. 4 Jan.1938

- 1.2.6 Handwritten letter with envelope on behalf of MK Gandhi from Amrit Kaur, Congress Camp, Haripura (India), to Clement Doke about the state of Gandhi's health. 15 Feb.1938
- 1.2.7 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi to Clement Doke about the death of his wife Kasturbai, during the time that they were political prisoners in India. Envelope has note *opened by examiner*. 26 Jul.1944

1.3 Correspondence from MK Gandhi to Olive Doke

- 1.3.1 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (Johannesburg) to Olive Doke about the education of Indian women. 3 Apr.1908
- 1.3.2 Handwritten note with envelope from MK Gandhi to Olive Doke about Jesus and the Biblical Book of Daniel. Jan.1909
- 1.3.3 Letter in indelible pencil, with envelope, from MK Gandhi (Natal) to Olive Doke about Mrs Gandhi's health and the Inanda Falls. 6 Jan.1909
- 1.3.4 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi, on board the *R.M.S Kenilworth Castle*, to Olive Doke, reminiscing about the Doke family and Gen. JC Smuts. 5 Jul.1909
- 1.3.5 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to Olive Doke about Lord Amphill, life in London and Mr Kallenbach. 18 Aug.1909
- 1.3.6 Typed letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (London) to Olive Doke about passive resistance and *the Indian Opinion* newspaper. 6 Oct.1909
- 1.3.7 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (Natal) to Olive Doke about Manilal Gandhi's letter of 6 Sept. and the Indian struggle. 12 Dec.1909
- 1.3.8 Handwritten letter with envelope from MK Gandhi (Johannesburg) to Olive Doke thanking her for greetings sent to him. 27 Dec.1909
- 1.3.9 Handwritten letter in pencil, with envelope, from MK Gandhi (Natal) to Olive Doke about the Indian community in Phoenix and Mr Kallenbach. 25 Feb.1910

1.4 Correspondence from Manilal and Sushila Gandhi to the Doke Family

- 1.4.1 Handwritten letter from Manilal Gandhi to Olive Doke about family affairs in Natal. 6 Sept.1909
- 1.4.2 Handwritten letter with envelope from Manilal Gandhi (Phoenix, Natal), on behalf of his wife Sushila, to Mrs Doke, thanking her for her gift to their baby. 21 Jan.1929
- 1.4.3 Handwritten cover letter from Manilal Gandhi to Clement Doke about his father, MK Gandhi's letter of 26 July. 27 Jul.1944
- 1.4.4 Typed letter with handwritten notes from Manilal Gandhi (India) to Clement Doke requesting him to write a contribution in a biography on MK Gandhi. 12 Apr.1946
- 1.4.5 Christmas card from Manilal and Sushila Gandhi to the Doke family. 1953
- 1.4.6 Handwritten letter from Manilal Gandhi (Phoenix, Natal) to Clement Doke about the latter's retirement. 25 Dec.1953

- 1.4.7 Handwritten letter from Manilal Gandhi (Durban, Natal) to Clement Doke about JJ Doke's *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*. 24 Oct.1955
- 1.4.8 Handwritten letter with envelope from Sita Gandhi (Mrs Dhupelia), Phoenix, Natal, on behalf of her mother, Sushila, to Olive Doke about the death of Sushila's husband Manilal Gandhi, and the value of prayer. 2 May 1956

1.5 Correspondence from Ramdas Gandhi to the Doke Family

- 1.5.1 Typed letter from Ramdas Gandhi, Sevagram (India), to Clement Doke requesting permission to reprint JJ Doke's *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*. 13 Oct.1955
- 1.5.2 Handwritten air letter from Ramdas M Gandhi, Wardha (India), to Olive Doke about the Indian reprint of JJ Doke's *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*. 12 Sept.1966

1.6 Correspondence from Lord Ampthill to JJ Doke

- 1.6.1 Typed letter with envelope from Lord Ampthill to JJ Doke about the latter's publication *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*. 8 Dec.1909
- 1.6.2 Typed letter from Lord Ampthill to JJ Doke about the latter's request for an interview. 6 Nov.1910

1.7 Correspondence from TL Schreiner to JJ Doke

- 1.7.1 Postcard from TL Schreiner to JJ Doke about the settlement of the Indian question in South Africa. 13 Feb.1911

1.8 Correspondence from W Merriman to JJ Doke

- 1.8.1 Handwritten note with envelope from W Merriman to JJ Doke about *M.K. Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*. 20 Feb.1911

1.9 Correspondence from C Shukla to CM Doke

- 1.9.1 Handwritten air letter from Chandrashanker Shukla, Baroda (India), to Clement Doke about the article which the latter wrote for the publication *Incidents from Gandhij's life*. 15 Mrt.1948
- 1.9.2 Handwritten air letter from Chandrashanker Shukla, Baroda (India), to Clement Doke about the publication *Incidents from Gandhij's life*. 24 Jun.1949

1.10 Correspondence from B Kumarappa to CM Doke

- 1.10.1 Typed letter from Bharatan Kumarappa, Indian editor of the collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, to CM Doke about correspondence between MK Gandhi and JJ Doke which he wanted to publish. 2 May 1956
- 1.10.2 Typed letter from Bharatan Kumarappa to CM Doke about copies of correspondence between MK Gandhi and JJ Doke. 2 Jul.1956

1.11 Correspondence from B Britton to CM Doke

- 1.11.1 Typed letter from the American attorney, Burnett Britton, to CM Doke requesting a copy of the publication *MK Gandhi: An Indian patriot in South Africa*, by JJ Doke. 15 Jun.1959
- 1.11.2 Typed letter from Burnett Britton to CM Doke requesting information about MK Gandhi's life between 1903 and 1914, as well as information about the *Indian Opinion* newspaper. 27 Nov.1959
- 1.11.3 Typed letter from Burnett Britton to CM Doke requesting information about MK Gandhi's life concerning the period 1893 to 1897. 1 Apr.1969
- 1.11.4 Typed letter from Burnett Britton to CM Doke about original source materials on MK Gandhi's life. 15 Apr.1969

1.12 Correspondence from SD Raja Singam to CM Doke

- 1.12.1 Handwritten air letter from SD Raja Singam (Malaya) to CM Doke requesting permission to use the latter's memorial article in a publication. 15 Jan.1960

1.13 Correspondence from K Roy to CM Doke

- 1.13.1 Typed letter from Kshitis Roy to CM Doke requesting artefacts and mementos of MK Gandhi for the memorial museum in New Delhi. 11 Aug.1962

1.14 Correspondence from Peter Chafer to CM Doke

- 1.14.1 Typed letter from Peter Chafer, BBC (London), to Clement Doke about a proposed documentary film on the spiritual development of MK Gandhi. 6 Feb.1969
- 1.14.2 Handwritten letter from Clement Doke to Peter Chafer about the BBC TV programme on MK Gandhi to be filmed in South Africa. 13 Feb.1969
- 1.14.3 Typed letter from Peter Chafer, BBC (London), to Clement Doke about his proposed visit to the latter in South Africa. 19 Feb.1969
- 1.14.4 Typed letter from Peter Chafer, BBC (London), to Clement Doke, in which he postponed his visit to South Africa. 4 Mar.1969
- 1.14.5 Typed letter from Peter Chafer, BBC (London), to Clement Doke, about the South African government's refusal to grant visas to the TV crew, Malcolm Muggeridge and himself. 18 Mar.1969

2. Published material

2.1 MK Gandhi and the Doke family

- 2.1.1 MK Gandhi at our house, handwritten article by Clement Doke. 1908
- 2.1.2 The late Mr Joseph J Doke, a memoir. *Indian Opinion*, 23 Aug. 1913
- 2.1.3 Invitation to Mrs JJ Doke to attend Messrs MK Gandhi and H Kallenbach's farewell dinner. 11 Jul.1914
- 2.1.4 Gandhi and a Baptist minister, his debt to the Rev Joseph Doke, by HSL Polak. *The Baptist Times*, 12 Feb.1948
- 2.1.5 Souvenir programme of the Commonwealth Baptist Pageant. 8 - 9 Jun.1951

2.2 MK Gandhi's life and career (general)

- 2.2.1 Photograph of Indian Volunteer Stretcher Bearer Corps. c 1900
- 2.2.2 Asiatic Law, the Germiston case. *The Transvaal Leader*, 15 Nov.1907
- 2.2.3 Asiatic registration, Government action. *The Transvaal Leader*, 28 Dec.1907
- 2.2.4 A Johannesburg demonstration. *The Transvaal Leader*, 28 Dec.1907
- 2.2.5 Cartoons (6) about the Transvaal Asiatic Bill. c1908
- 2.2.6 My prison experiences by MK Gandhi. *Indian Opinion*, 7 Mar.1908
- 2.2.7 Asiatic landlords salient facts. *The Transvaal Leader*, 20 Apr.1908
- 2.2.8 Asiatic Question the points at issue. Repeal of Act demanded. Mr Gandhi's action. Voluntary registration cancelled. *The Star*, 28 May 1908
- 2.2.9 Feeling in England. *The Star*, 28 May 1908
- 2.2.10 Asiatic Question. *The Transvaal Leader*, 22 Jun.1908
- 2.2.11 Asiatic Question Government policy, interview with Colonial Secretary. *The Transvaal Leader*, 23 Jun.1908
- 2.2.12 British Indians at the mosque, Government's action censured, indignation meeting. *The Transvaal Leader*, 25 Jun.1908
- 2.2.13 Cartoon about the Asiatic Question, open defiance of the law. *The Star*, 15 Aug.1908
- 2.2.14 Cartoon about the Asiatic Bill, the mad cow. *Rand Daily Mail*, 26 Aug.1908
- 2.2.15 The mass meeting speeches. Strong European sympathy by Rev. JJ Doke. *Indian Opinion*, 14 Nov.1908. Handwritten copy also available.
- 2.2.16 Letter by Edward Dallow. Review Indian Home Rule. *The Transvaal Leader*, May 1910
- 2.2.17 Unsigned letter by MK Gandhi in reply to E Darlow's review of Indian Home Rule. *The Transvaal Leader*, 4 May 1910
- 2.2.18 Still resisting. *Rand Daily Mail*, 28 Mar.1911
- 2.2.19 The Asiatic Question. Letters between Mr Gandhi and the Minister of the Interior. *The Transvaal Leader*, 27 Apr.1911
- 2.2.20 Colour Bar. Close of bitter struggle. Final settlement outlined. Mr Gandhi's views. *The Star*. 28 Apr.1911
- 2.2.21 A settlement in sight. *The Transvaal Leader*, 28 Apr.1911
- 2.2.22 Passive resisters settlement arrived at. *The Transvaal Leader*, 29 Apr.1911
- 2.2.23 Extracts from the *Indian Opinion*: Reverend Doke's letter and editorial about the Asiatic Registration Act in *The Friend*. 11 Jul.1908

2.2.24 *Our Bond*. Field news and notes of the Australian & New Zealand Baptist Missions in Bengal. vol 27, Apr.1921

2.2.25 The Asiatic rupture. *The Star* , without date

2.2.26 Letter from P Duncan. *The Star*, without date

2.3 MK Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy

2.3.1 Typed copy of letter from MK Gandhi to Count Leo Tolstoy, 10 Nov. 1909

2.3.2 Tolstoy and Gandhi by Romain Rolland. *Issue Pax International*, Nov.1928

2.3.3 Photograph of letter from Gandhi to Count Leo Tolstoy, as well as photographs of both of the men. *The Unesco Courier*, Jul.1957

2.3.4 The lost letter of Mahatma Gandhi by Alexandre Chifman. *The Unesco Courier*, Jul. 1957

2.4 Death of Kasturbai Gandhi

2.4.1 The late Mrs Kasturba Gandhi, impressive funeral ceremony. *Indian Opinion*, 28 Apr.1944

2.5 Death of MK Gandhi

2.5.1 Appreciation of Rev Joseph Doke by Indian community. *Cape Argus*, Jan.1948

2.5.2 Last pictures of Gandhi taken before his death. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.3 Editorial about Gandhi. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.4 Obituary Mr Gandhi. Dominant role in Indian nationalism. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.5 Assassination of Mr Gandhi. Hindu's 3 shots at point blank range. Mourners file past bedside all night. Delhi cremation today: nationwide fast. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.6 Irreparable loss to India and world. King's message to Lord Mountbatten. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.7 Indians mourn in London. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.8 Troops out, police fire on Bombay mobs. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.9 Mr Jinnah is shocked. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.10 Tribute by Mr Truman. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 Jan.1948

2.5.11 India communal tension rises. Fresh riots: troops called out. Hindu extremists attacked. Cabinet divisions: Mr Nehru may resign. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Feb.1948

2.5.12 Fear of Indian aims deepens in Pakistan. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Feb.1948

2.5.13 Extremist plot suspected. Bombay arrests. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Feb.1948

- 2.5.14 Lord Mountbatten thanks King, sympathy for India. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Feb.1948
- 2.5.15 Photograph of funeral pyre of Mr Gandhi. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Feb.1948
- 2.5.16 Kindness to Gandhi was not forgotten. *Lismore* (Ceylon), 7 Feb.1948
- 2.5.17 Gandhi had no estate. *Lismore* (Ceylon), 7 Feb.1948
- 2.5.18 Letter of HSL Pollak about the *Indian Opinion* newspaper. *Manchester Guardian*, 12 Feb.1948
- 2.5.19 A Gandhi memorial service. *The Baptist Times*, 12 Feb.1948
- 2.5.20 Proof of a reprint of an article with tribute to Gandhi by CM Doke. Envelope included. *Indian Opinion Mahatma Gandhi memorial number*, Mar.1948
- 2.5.21 First day cover with Gandhi memorial stamps issued by the Bombay Philatelic Co. 15 Aug.1948
- 2.5.22 Gandhi and his young philatelists. Without date
- 2.5.23 Mr Gandhi in South Africa, article by Olive Doke in an Indian ladies' magazine. Without date

2.6 Television documentary on MK Gandhi's life

- 2.6.1 Gandhi's stay in Republic to be filmed for TV. *Daily Dispatch*, 8 Feb.1969
- 2.6.2 Muggeridge-in-the-woodpile may stop Gandhi film. *Daily Dispatch*, 14 Mar.1969
- 2.6.3 The man South Africa won't allow in. *Daily Dispatch*, 20 Mar.1969
- 2.6.4 Muggeridge should have been let in says Paton. *Daily Dispatch*, 20 Mar.1969
- 2.6.5 Republic refuses visas to Muggeridge, TV team. *Daily Dispatch*, without date

2.7 Legacy of MK Gandhi

- 2.7.1 Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa today by Homer A Jack. *Indian Opinion*, 1 Aug. 1952
- 2.7.2 Gandhi Centenary 1969 *Opinion*. 24 Aug.1962
- 2.7.3 The world remembers Gandhi. *The Daily Dispatch*, 3 Dec.1968
- 2.7.4 Gandhi: diminutive man who started a gentle world revolution. City was cradle of his philosophy. *The Star*, 26 Jun.1969
- 2.7.5 Gandhi in South Africa by RS Nowbath. *South African Outlook*, Sept.1969
- 2.7.6 Gandhi - a prince among men. *Daily Dispatch*, 2 Oct.1969
- 2.7.7 Of disobedience and love. *Daily Dispatch*, 2 Oct.1969
- 2.7.8 Photograph of Mahatma Gandhi. *Race Relations News*, Nov.1969

2.7.9 The uniqueness of Gandhi 1869 - 1969 by the Rev RJD Robertson. *Race Relations News*, Nov.1969

2.7.10 Editorial about Gandhi 1869 - 1969. *Reality*, Nov.1969

2.7.11 Book review of publication *Gandhi's truth* by Erik H Erikson. 1970

3. Photographs

3.1 Photograph of MK Gandhi convalescing at JJ Doke's manse after the assault. 1908

3.2 Photograph of MK Gandhi and Mr Gokale's visit to the manse. Rev and Mrs JJ Doke, Olive Doke and local Indian leaders also appear on the photograph. Without date