

Connecticut Historical Society
museum & library

Wattles Family Papers, 1776-1865

A Guide to the collection at the Connecticut Historical Society

Collection Overview

Repository:	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut
Creator :	Wattles Family
Title :	Wattles Family Papers
Dates :	1776-1865
Extent :	0.5 linear feet (1 box)
Location:	Ms 100771
Language:	English

Biographical Sketch

The patriarch of the family was Captain Denison Wattles, father of Denison (b. 1791) and William Wattles. The Wattles family is from Lebanon, CT. Denison Jr. moved to Manlius, NY, and was shortly followed by his brother William in 1816. William moved to practice medicine on Long Island in 1832. He married Juliet Huntington October 18, 1833 in Lebanon. While married to Juliet he traveled to Michigan in 1837 and then back to Sag Harbor. Juliet subsequently died and William married Abigail Hazzard from New York in 1843. William had children with Abigail Hazzard. William kept in correspondence with his brother-in-law L.L. (Lynde Lord) Huntington (b. August 15, 1807), who was a participant in the temperance movement in Lebanon. He also wrote to his cousin Thomas Wattles (b. October 11, 1744) and his niece Eliza Wattles, who married and moved to Plainfield, CT. William was a personal friend of the mayor of Norwalk and later Governor William A. Buckingham.

Scope and Content

The collection was received in 1948, in no particular order or arrangement. The papers have now been arranged by recipient or correspondent chronologically.

William Wattles wrote to his father from Manlius, NY in 1816. He had traveled by boat to upper New York to stay with his brother, Denison Wattles, Jr. Both William and his brother wrote to his father about Manlius, the opportunities and the solitude that were experienced in the wilderness in 1816 and 1817.

The next letters of William Wattles are to his wife, Juliet Wattles nee Harrington (m. Oct. 18, 1833). The correspondence began in 1837, while William and Juliet's brother L.L. Harrington were in Lyon, Oakland County, Michigan. William described the travel by boat, including stops at Detroit and Ypsilanti. He enjoyed the opportunities in Michigan, but felt that he would be better suited for the climate in Illinois or Ohio. In early 1837, L.L. Harrington wrote William from Barry County, Michigan, questioning whether or not there were better opportunities out west than there were in Lebanon or a town near Lebanon. Harrington also advised William that most of the population was not Yankee, but rather immigrants.

In 1838, William Wattles lived in Sag Harbor where he spent the remainder of his life with few short trips to Connecticut and to other towns on Long Island and in New York. His wife, Juliet Wattles, died some time between 1840 and 1843. William corresponded with Abigail Hazzard in 1843. Abigail Hazzard was in New York City during the courtship and relocated to Lebanon after she married William. William and Abigail both alluded to being married in Sag Harbor, NY in July of 1843. They remained in correspondence until 1865, which make up a majority of the letters.

William Wattles received a series of summons from the Washington Encampment No. 1 from 1820 to 1830. The summons may have been for Masonic meetings. Several of the invitations have distinct symbols on them.

William Wattles was a steadfastly religious man. Many of his correspondences are centered around descriptions of church services and thoughts on religious privileges. His father encouraged him to be devout and turn himself over to God in the earliest letters. William Wattles kept a journal of religious services he attended from 1819 to 1827. He owned a temperance hotel in Sag Harbor.

Thomas Wattles had correspondence with William regarding the family genealogy of Capitan Denison Wattles' family. Thomas was a cousin of William's who iterated a separate branch of the family history, starting with Charles Wattles who came from Scotland in 1705.

William A. Buckingham, mayor of Norwich (1849-1850, 1856-1857) and governor of Connecticut (1858-1866), was a friend of William Wattles. There are a few pieces of correspondence between the men, including one letter from the time when Buckingham was governor.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Use Restrictions

Use of the material requires compliance with the Connecticut Historical Society's Research Center regulations.

Subject Headings

Personal Names

Buckingham, William A. (William Alfred), 1804-1875.
Harrington, Lynde Lord.
Wattles, Abigail Hazard.
Wattles, Denison.
Wattles, Juliet Harrington.

Family Names

Wattles family.

Subjects

Christian life.
Freemasons --Connecticut.
Michigan --Description and travel.
New York (State) --Description and travel.
Temperance --Connecticut --Lebanon.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Item, Collection Title, Collection number (Box #, Folder #). Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut.

Processing Details

Collection was processed by Sasha Freese in 2009.

EAD Finding Aid created June 2011.

Accruals

The collection is closed.

Contents:

Papers

Box	Folder	
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1	1	William Wattles correspondence, 1816-1837
1	2	William Wattles incoming correspondence, 1842-1865
1	3	William Wattles to Juliet Wattles correspondence, 1837-1840
1	4	William Wattles and Abigail Hazzard correspondence, June 1843- July 1843
1	5	William Wattles and Abigail Wattles correspondence, June 1844- July 1844
1	6	William Wattles and Abigail Wattles correspondence, 1845-1865
1	7	William Wattles Mason meeting invitations, 1820-1830
1	8	Denison Wattles incoming correspondence,
1	9	William Wattles legal documents, 1828, 1840
1	10	William Wattles journal and prayer book
1	11	Denison Wattles accounts, 1776-1780
1	12	Attributed to John Wattles
1	13	Assorted Documents