

Connecticut Historical Society
museum & library

Augustine Harlow papers

A Guide to the collection at the Connecticut Historical Society

Collection Overview

Repository:	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut
Creator :	Harlow, Augustine
Title :	Augustine Harlow Papers
Dates :	1862-1979
Extent :	0.75 linear feet (1.5 boxes)
Location:	Ms 68508
Language:	English

Biographical Sketch

Augustine Harlow, a native of Maine, was born to Isaac Harlow and his wife approximately 1833. The Harlows also had a daughter, Flora E. Harlow (born September 1836), who would marry Charles A. Barry in 1868. Augustine Harlow was commissioned on 16 April 1852 to serve in Company A, First Regiment Infantry, First Brigade, First Division of the Massachusetts Militia and was discharged of his own request after attaining the rank of Captain in July 1859. The Federal Census lists him as a printer in Boston in 1860. Harlow served in the Civil War, mustering in and being commissioned in Boston on 16 July 1861. He later received a disability discharge and was mustered out of service on 3 August 1863. By 1880 Harlow had settled in Hartford, employed as a Clerk for the Adam's Express Company.

Ella Ritner (also called Ellie), was born in Pennsylvania to Abram and Mary W. Ritner ca. 1852. Ella had at least two sisters, Laura F. "Loll" Ritner (b. 1840), who married Francis B. Ripley (b. 1818); and Emma Jane (b. 1850). Ella Ritner married Augustine Harlow and the couple had five children: Bessie (born in March 1873), Mary E. (born ca. 1873), Albert F. (21 March 1886-April 1966), Flora R. (born ca. 1876) and Anna (born in April 1888). Following Augustine's death, the family moved to Bridgeport. It was while living there that Ella began to receive Augustine's military pension. It is unknown when Ella died, but her family seems to have moved away from Connecticut. Settling in South Orange, New Jersey, Albert F. Harlow became an accountant for a steamship company. He and his wife, Anne, had a son named Thompson Ritner "Tom" Harlow (16 September 1915- 14 July 1995).

Albert F. Harlow came to possess the collection of his family's correspondence and donated it to the CHS, where Tom Harlow served as Director and Director Emeritus for over forty years.

Scope and Content

This collection has been divided into two series: Correspondence and Related Papers. Within each series, papers have been organized according to individual family members. Folders have been arranged chronologically by birth date from oldest to youngest, with the exception of the large number of letters produced daily between Augustine and Ella Harlow, which have been filed at the end of the Correspondence series. Within each folder, items have been arranged chronologically and most folders contain correspondence both written and received by the specific couple or family member. Items with no dates have been filed in the back of the folders.

The majority of this collection is family correspondence with the bulk of the material comprising letters, practically written daily, between Augustine and Ella Harlow. The letters are in chronological order. The couple mainly discussed their budding relationship (and later marriage), as well as life at home in Hartford, Connecticut and Weston, Massachusetts. There are several letters between Augustine and Ella which contain pressed flowers and have been placed in archival storage bags.

Flora E. Barry's correspondence describes the personal and very heart-wrenching accounts of a woman and her family troubled by an abusive and slandering husband. The letters trace the start of Flora's unhappiness and unease and eventually show how her career and personal life were almost destroyed by her husband's accusations. Fearing the then lawful charge of desertion, Flora fought her case in court, won, and continued her singing career throughout New England.

The letters of Emma Jean Ritner mention local incidents of rape and sexual assault as well as instances of childhood injury. Many family members reference the Boston Fire of 1872 as well as their views towards local home life, travel, sickness, holidays and politics.

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

Barry, Flora E.
Harlow, Ella Ritner, b. 1852
Ripley, Francis B., b. 1841
Ripley, Laura F., b. 1848
Ritner, Emma Jane, b. 1850

Family Names

Ripley family.
Ritner family.

Subjects

Burns and scalds in children.
Courtship.
Divorce -- Massachusetts -- Boston
Family violence -- Massachusetts -- Boston
Military pensions.
Rape -- Massachusetts -- Boston
Women -- Legal status, laws, etc.

Geographic Names

Boston -- Fire, 1872.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

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

Processing Details

Collection was processed by Zac Mirecki in 2009.

EAD Finding Aid created February 2011.

Accruals

The collection is closed.

Contents:

I. Correspondence

Box	Folder	
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1	1	Augustine Harlow, 1865, 1873-1878
1	2	Flora E. Barry, 1872-1874
1	3	Francis B. Ripley, 1872
1	4	Laura F. Ripley, 1862-1873
1	5	Emma Jane Ritner, 1872
1	6	Ella Harlow (Ritner), 1872, 1873, 1876
1	7	Augustine and Ella Harlow, August 1871-September 1871
1	8	Augustine and Ella Harlow, October 1871-November 1871

Box	Folder	
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2	1	Augustine and Ella Harlow, December 1871-February 1872
2	2	Augustine and Ella Harlow, March 1872-July 1872
2	3	Augustine and Ella Harlow, August 1872-October 1872

II. Related Papers

Box	Folder	
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2	4	Advertisements/Bills-- circa 1870-1875, undated
2	5	Military Pension Records -- 1890-1907, 1979
2	6	Letter fragment-circa 1865-1875
2	7	Telegrams-1871-1874