

The Gardner Family Bicentennial Papers, 1787?-1897?

Repository: Hingham Public Library
Manuscript Number: MSC #4
Creator(s): Gardner Family and John P. Richardson
Quantity: ½ document box, 5 oversized folders
Processed By: Stephanie McBain and Jennifer Williams. Finding aid completed in February of 2014.
Access: Open for research. Some materials have been placed in protective enclosures and should not be removed from them.
Related Materials: The Bicentennial Collection contains town records that relate to the Gardner family. The Lincoln Family Papers also contain genealogical information on the Gardner family.

Provenance

These papers were created by various members of the Gardner, Leach, and Amadon families while living in Hingham and the surrounding area. This is an artificial collection, having been collected and assembled by John Richardson in the mid-twentieth century. Part of it was donated in 1974 and the remainder in 1981 as part of the Bicentennial Collection.

Biographical Note

The first Gardner to settle in Hingham was John Gardner, who came to the town in the early 1650s. Little is known about John's early life or where he came from, but he may be related to the Garners or Gardners of Boston. He met his wife, Mary, in Boston in 1651 and they had ten children, all born in Hingham. John had land granted to him in the southern part of Hingham in 1656. He died on November 24, 1668, leaving his wife and young children with very little money - they had to sell goats to maintain themselves. Mary remarried to Nathaniel Chubbuck shortly after John's death.

Samuel Gardner, the great-grandson of John Gardner (d. 1668), was born in Hingham on August 5, 1745 to Samuel Gardner (1713-1774) and Abigail Simmons (b. 1715). In 1774 he married Alatheia Oakman (1754-1788), daughter of Tobias and Lydia (Briggs) Oakman, and they had seven children: Samuel, Peleg, Christiana, Jesse, Oakman, Cynthia, and Constant. Alatheia died in 1788 and the next year Samuel married Chloe Whiton (1758-1833), daughter of Enoch and Joanna (Whiton) Whiton. They had six children together: Enoch Whiton, Alatheia, Abigail, Anthony, Chloe, and Calvin. Samuel was a farmer and became a constable in 1776. He resided at "Liberty Plain" in South Hingham until his death on December 24, 1831.

Oakman Gardner was born in Hingham on April 18, 1783 to Samuel Gardner (1745-1831) and Alatheia Oakman (1754-1788). Oakman was a housewright and died in Boston in 1837 of dropsy. No more information was available at the time this document was written.

Enoch Whiton Gardner was born in Hingham on May 11, 1790 to Samuel Gardner (1745-1831) and Chloe Whiton (1758-1833). In 1828 he married Hortensia (Orra) Amadon (1800-1876) of

Claremont, N.H. They had three children together: George Doane, Mary Roxana, and John Calvin. Enoch was a bricklayer and resided at Liberty Plain in South Hingham until his death on March 31, 1864.

Hortensia (Amadon) Gardner was born on August 4, 1800 in Claremont, New Hampshire to John Amadon and Roxana Leach. In 1828 she married Enoch W. Gardner, and they had three children: George Doane, Mary Roxana, and John Calvin. She resided at Liberty Plain in South Hingham until her death on January 7, 1876.

George Doane Gardner was born in Boston on August 28, 1828 to Enoch W. Gardner (1790-1864) and Hortensia (Orra) Amadon (1800-1876). He was listed as a painter until he became a soldier in the Civil War. He enlisted in August of 1862 and was mustered at Hingham into Company G of the 39th Infantry Regiment in September of that year. He achieved the rank of Private and participated in battles at Brock Pike, Mine Run, Laurel Hill, Spottsylvania, North Anna, Bethesda Church, and Petersburg. He became ill in July of 1864 and was taken to the Fifth Corps Hospital in City Point, Virginia. He died there on August 4, 1864 due to an inflammation of the bowels.

John Calvin Gardner was born in Hingham on September 13, 1839 to Enoch W. Gardner (1790-1864) and Hortensia (Orra) Amadon (1800-1876). In 1868 he married Henrietta G. Eldredge Webb (b. 1839), daughter of Hezekiah T. and Emily (Clark) Webb. They were married in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where Henrietta and her family resided. John and Henrietta had two children: Mary Grace and Addie Louisa. John was a paper-hanger who resided on Main Street at Liberty Plain in South Hingham. He was elected to be the Overseer of the Poor in 1895, the year that he became a member of the Old Colony Lodge of Masons in 1895. He remained a member of the latter organization until his death on November 17, 1898.

Charles Gardner was a 6th generation Hinghamite born on April 3, 1807 to Charles Gardner (1778-1838) and Silence Sprague (1774-1834). In 1830 he married Hannah Whiting (1803-1884), daughter of Sylvanus and Hannah (Stodder) Whiting, and they had five children: Martha Ann, Marietta, Charles Austin, Marcus Morton, and Hannah Whiton. Charles was a shoe-maker and lived on Whiting Street. He died on August 9, 1873.

Isaac Gardner was also a 6th generation Hinghamite born on December 9, 1834 to Calvin Gardner (1786-1847) and Hannah Stodder (1789-1811). In 1873 he married Mary Ella Cosgrove of Boston, and they had one daughter: Mary Alice. Isaac was a grocer and lived on Water Street. He died on March 31, 1898.

Scope and Content Note

This collection focuses on the records of the Gardner family of Hingham, Mass. between 1787 and 1897. The majority of the materials focus on the Enoch (1790-1864) and Hortensia (1800-1876) Gardner family unit. This includes their parents and children. Records include correspondence related to daily family life, deeds for land purchased by the family members, taxes owed and paid, and such personal records as membership certificates for different associations, poems, and notifications of elections to public office. These materials date between

approximately 1797 and 1897. There are also records related to Charles (1807-1873) and Oakman (1783-1837) Gardner. The former documents are mostly day books detailing Charles' personal and shoemaking business accounts between the years of 1824 and 1868. There is also a poem written by Charles in 1820. The records relating to Oakman Gardner, dating between 1811 and 1815, detail taxes he owed and paid as well as his participation in the military between 1811 and 1815. Finally, there are several personal and property records dating between approximately 1787 and 1868 that focus on the activities of miscellaneous Gardner family members, including unsigned poems, deeds to family pews, and the enrollment of sea vessels.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into the following four series:

- Series I. Enoch & Hortensia Gardner Family Papers, 1797-1897?
 - Subseries I. Hortensia Gardner Family Correspondence, 1797-1844
 - Subseries II. John Calvin Gardner Correspondence, 1856-1897
 - Subseries III. Property & Financial Records, 1816-1888
 - Subseries IV. Personal Records, 1823?-1895?
- Series II. Charles Gardner Papers, 1820-1868
- Series III. Oakman Gardner Papers, 1811-1815
- Series IV. Miscellaneous Personal and Property Records, 1787?-1868?

Series I. Enoch & Hortensia Gardner Family Papers, 1797-1897?

Subseries I. Hortensia Gardner Family Correspondence, 1797-1844 Flat File Folder 1

This subseries contains thirteen letters written to Hortensia (Amadon) Gardner (1800-1876) and her family. The earliest letter, written in 1797, is from Hortensia's father John Amadon to her maternal grandfather Mr. Leach ensuring a concerned Leach that he truly loves his daughter Roxana and is not merely satisfying his "carnal desire." The other letters were all written between 1815 and 1844. Most of the letters were written to Hortensia, and sometimes her husband Enoch, from various authors: Hortensia's sister Roxana Newman; Hortensia's mother, Roxana Amadon; Hortensia's cousins Mary Leach, Calvin Leach, and Ann M. Pratt; and Hortensia's brother, Athial Amadon. There are also two letters written to Roxana Amadon from her son-in-law Thomas Newman and her daughter Roxana Newman. The letters focus mostly on family news, including recent marriages and deaths (including the deaths of Hortensia's brother and mother), trips to visit family and friends, reproaches for a lack of communication, health problems, and the activities of children and grandchildren. Finally, there are two letters written by George Doane Gardner (1828-1864) in 1844 on opposite sides of the same piece of paper. One letter discusses the processes involved in farming, while the other focuses on the different joys each season brings. It is possible that these two letters were writing exercises.

Subseries II. John Calvin Gardner Correspondence, 1856-1897?

Box 1, Folder 1

This subseries is composed of twenty-five letters written to John Calvin Gardner (1839-1898). The first letter was written in 1856 by John's father, Enoch Whiton Gardner (1790-1864). Enoch encourages his young son to make something of himself and decide whether or not the paper hanging business is what he wants to do with his life. The majority of the letters were written in the 1880s and 1890s by John Calvin's cousin Sarah Mulligan, Aunt Mary Smith, and cousins W. G. and Mary Cutler. These items focus mostly on family affairs, including selling houses, the deaths of relatives, and the health of the writers and their families. An 1885 letter from John J. May discusses genealogical research being conducted by May and George Lincoln, especially May's happiness at finding out more about his family and his desire to help Lincoln in any way he can. May wrote another letter in 1887 expressing the need for John to look at his paper hanging, which appears to be curling. Other authors of only one or two letters in the 1890s include M. G. Blakeman, John's mother Hortensia Gardner (1800-1876), Hattie L. Alden, J. Knight, S. H. Barrett, and John's daughter Grace.

Subseries III. Property & Financial Records, 1816-1888

Box 1, Folder 2; Flat File Folder 2

This subseries, composed of sixteen documents, focuses mostly on Enoch Whiton Gardner (1790-1864). Financial records include four receipts, dated between 1816 and 1838, stating that Enoch paid his state, county, and town taxes. There is also an 1821 document binding Enoch, Oakman (1783-1837), and John Calvin (1839-1898) to several other members of the Gardner family for the sum of four-thousand dollars. The conditions of the bond are detailed in the document. Finally, there is also a document detailing John Calvin's debts and credits to J. Whitney during the year of 1896.

The ten property records include deeds transferring land ownership to Enoch (and in some cases his close relatives as well), a deed in which Mann Gardner sells Enoch a portion of pew number fifteen in South Parish, correspondence related to John Calvin's claim to part of Elizabeth W. Wilder's estate, and a deed dividing land between Enoch and Oakman. These records date between 1816 and 1888.

Subseries IV. Personal Records, 1823?-1895?

Box 1, Folder 3; Flat File Folder 3

This subseries contains six items focusing mostly on Enoch Whiton Gardner (1790-1864), his wife Hortensia Gardner (1800-1876), and their sons John Calvin (1839-1898) and George Doane (1828-1864). The items focusing on Enoch Whiton Gardner include a receipt for his one-hundred dollar donation toward a new building for the Central Universalist Society in Hingham (circa 1823) and his 1850 membership certificate for the Mechanics' Mutual Benefit Association of Springfield, Mass. The item pertaining to

Hortensia Gardner is an undated poem written to her by Mrs. S. A. Kilbourn. It focuses mostly on a romance between Hortensia's son and a woman named Eunice.

There are also two documents focusing on John Calvin Gardner. The first is an undated genealogy detailing important events in his life as well as those of his wife and children. It was written on the back of a blank receipt/advertisement for John's business as a paper hanger in South Hingham. The second item is a note from Charles Marsh, the town Clerk, stating that John was elected to the office of Overseer of the Poor on March 4, 1895. The last document is a handwritten, undated copy of a letter about George Doane's death in 1864. It contains information related to his military service, including the belief of the unknown writer that his death was directly caused by the conditions in which he served as a member of the army.

Series II. Charles Gardner Papers, 1820-1868

Box 1, Folders 4-5; Flat File Folder 4

This series is composed of nine account books and one poem, all of which were created by Charles Gardner (1807-1873). Seven of the books detail Charles' personal accounts, including both credits and debts for Charles and those with whom he worked. Typical work and services provided by Charles include selling foodstuffs, helping to harvest crops, and laying stone, while his expenditures include transporting materials using a horse and wagon, procuring labor for construction projects, and foodstuffs. In many cases Charles or those he worked for also paid using cash. These account books date between 1830 and 1868, and many contain overlapping years. There are also two daybooks detailing the credits and debts for Charles' business as a shoemaker. Work completed by Charles includes making, repairing, and sizing shoes, while payment for his services often took the form of foodstuffs, construction work on Charles' property, and cash. Other transactions, such as those listed in Charles' personal account books, are also included. Finally, the series includes a poem written by Charles in 1820 at the age of twelve. Entitled "Gratitude," the poem focuses on the fact that just as plants and rivers give back to nature, so does the grateful man return favors received from others.

Series III. Oakman Gardner Papers, 1811-1815

Box 1, Folder 6

This series is composed of five documents, most of which are related to Oakman Gardner's (1783-1837) tax payments. There are two documents from the state treasurer listing the state, town, and county taxes owed by Oakman in 1811 and 1818, and another two documents from the Boston Treasury Office stating that he paid his taxes in full for the years of 1811 and 1812. Finally, there is a document from May 29, 1815 stating that Oakman has been enrolled in an infantry company under the command of Captain Roulston and is ordered to appear for company duty.

Note: Deeds for land bought by Oakman Gardner and his relatives can be found in Series I, Subseries II.

Series IV. Miscellaneous Personal and Property Records, 1787?-1868?
Flat File Folder 5

This series is composed of three printed and handwritten documents. The first item is the deed to Stephen Gardner's pew at the Second Parish Church. It is signed by Stephen Gardner, Isaac Wilder, and Sarah Brooks, and is dated November 16, 1787. The second document is an undated and unsigned poem focusing on the authors' happiest memories, including spending time with friends, relaxing on his/her aunt's piazza, and the beautiful scenery he/she enjoyed. Finally, there is an 1868 enrollment and licensing document for the schooner *Chameleon*, which was owned by Isaac Gardner (1834-1898), Elias Beals, Alexis Long, James Lorry, and Henry Newton. The schooner, built in 1848, was bought from Martin Stodder. The document includes the specifications for the schooner as well as the percentage of the vessel owned by each of the partners listed above.