

The Whiton Family Bicentennial Papers, 1737 - 1883

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Access:	Open for research. Some materials have been placed in protective enclosures and should not be removed from them.
Related Materials:	The Bicentennial Collection also contains records that relate to the Whiton family.

Provenance

These papers were originally created by various members of the Whiton family in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries while they were living in Hingham. 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 member of the Whiton family to reside in Hingham was James Whiton who arrived in approximately 1647. During that year he married Mary Beal (1622-1696), daughter of John and Nazareth (Hobart) Beal, who was born in Hingham, England. The couple had nine children together, four of whom died as infants. James received a land grant from the town in 1657 and was later allotted other plots of meadow and upland. He farmed this land, located in the Liberty Plain area of Hingham, although his farmhouse was one of five in the town that were burned by Indians during King Philip's War (1676-1677). He also bought a substantial amount of property in other towns, including Scituate and Hanover. Through his endeavors, James became relatively wealthy, being one of the largest tax-payers in the town in 1681. Upon his death in 1710 his will provided for a great deal of money and land to go to both his children and grandchildren.

Enoch Whiton, grandson of James Whiton (d. 1710), was born in 1699 to Enoch Whiton (c. 1660-1714) and Mary Lincoln (1662-1716). In 1732 he married Leah Stetson, daughter of Benjamin and Grace (Turner) Stetson of Scituate, and the couple had six children together. Enoch was a prominent figure in Hingham, serving as a selectman eight times between the years of 1733 and 1755. He was also a wealthy farmer. He and his family lived at Liberty Plain in South Hingham. Enoch's date of death is unknown.

Samuel Whiton, great-grandson of James Whiton (d. 1710), was born in either 1712 or 1713 to Samuel Whiton (b. 1685) and Margaret Tower (c. 1686-1738). In approximately 1733 he married Mary Wing (d. 1795), daughter of Bachelor and Joanna (Hatch) Wing of Hanover, and they had six children together. The family lived at Liberty Plain in South Hingham. Samuel served as a constable during the years of 1747 and 1753. He may have died in 1777.

Elizabeth "Bette" Marble was born in 1736 to Nathaniel and Susanna (Worrick) Marble. In 1756 she married Jacob Whiton (1731/32-1816), who was a cooper and great-grandson of James Whiton (d.

1710). The couple resided on Main Street near Tower's Bridge and had eight children together. The date of Elizabeth's death is unknown.

Hannah Stodder was born in 1778 to Laban and Persis (Wilder) Stodder. In 1800 she married Sylvanus Whiton (b. 1775), a great-grandson of Samuel Whiton (b. 1685). The couple lived with their seven children at Liberty Plain in South Hingham. Hannah died in 1865.

Isaiah Whiton, great-great-great-grandson of James Whiton (d. 1710), was born in Hingham in 1789 to Israel Whiton (1758-1840) and Hannah Stowell (1761-1827). In 1810 he married Martha Davis Easterbrook (c. 1790-1857), daughter of Gorham and Susanna (Gorham) Easterbrook, and they had eleven children together. Isaiah was a packetman, meaning that he was a sailor on a ship that transported important cargo, passengers, and/or mail. Isaiah and his family lived on South Street near Magoon's Bridge. He died in 1871.

Royal Whiton, brother of Isaiah Whiton (1789-1871), was born in Hingham in 1792 to Israel Whiton (1758-1840) and Hannah Stowell (1761-1827). In 1811 he married Esther Cleverly (c. 1787-1867), daughter of Henry and Elizabeth (Defiler) Cleverly of Quincy, and they had nine children together. Royal was a trader who owned a general store and lived with his family on South Street, close to Thaxter's Bridge. Royal died in 1877 at the age of eighty-five.

Wilson Whiton, Jr., a descendent of James Whiton (d. 1710), was born in 1805 to Wilson Whiton (1777-1854) and Chloe White (d. 1853). Wilson was born deaf, and in 1817 he was sent to Hartford, CT to attend the newly founded Connecticut Asylum for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Persons (later called the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb at Hartford). He was one of seven students to attend the school in its first academic year. After graduating from the Asylum he became a teacher there, a position he would hold until at least 1870. In 1855 Wilson married Sybil Smith Richards (c. 1823-1863), daughter of Alexander and Sybil (Smith) Richards, who had also attended the Asylum. Sybil died in 1863 and the couple had no children together. At some point after 1870 Wilson moved back to Hingham, where he died of heart disease in 1873.

Lyman B. Whiton, grandson of Israel Whiton (1758-1840), was born in 1834 to Job S. Whiton (1797-1875) and Lucy Farren (1802-1884). Lyman was a salesman by occupation and worked and lived on the paternal homestead on South Street. In 1853 he married Sarah F. Dyer (1834-1880), daughter of Solomon L. and Sally (Stodder) Dyer, and they had seven children, three of whom died in infancy. Lyman served in the Army during the Civil War, reaching the rank of major in the Third Regiment, Massachusetts Heavy Artillery. He was posted first to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor and then, in 1864, to Ft. Berry and Ft. Richardson in Virginia. He and his fellow soldiers participated in the defense of Washington, DC. He died in 1909.

Bela H. Whiton, a descendent of James Whiton (d. 1710), was born in 1816 to Elijah Whiton (1799-1871) and Lydia Wilder (1801-1864). In 1844 he married Hannah R. Whiton (1818-1860), daughter of Ezra and Emma (Jones) Whiton, and they had five children together. In 1870, ten years after Hannah's death, Bela married Mary C. Hersey (b. 1834), daughter of Stephen and Maria (Lincoln) Hersey. The couple had two children together. Bela was a carriage maker and wheelwright who lived with his family on the paternal homestead at the corner of Main and Central Streets. He died in 1898 of enteritis.

Peter L. Whiton, brother of Hannah R. Whiton (1818-1860), was born in 1816 to Ezra Whiton (1772-1850) and Emma Jones (1774-1858). In 1846 he married Sarah A. P. Densmore (b. 1828), daughter of

David and Sarah Densmore, and they had one child together. Peter worked in several different fields, including farming and mackerel fishing/trading. He also served as deputy inspector of pickled fish, being the last person to hold this position before it was abolished. Peter lived on Lincoln Street until his death in 1897 from heart disease.

Scope and Content Note

This collection is composed of materials dating between 1737 and 1883 related to the Whiton family of Hingham, Mass. The majority of the records detail the lives of Isaiah Whiton (1789-1871), Lyman B. Whiton (1834-1909), and Peter L. Whiton (1816-1897). These items, which document both the personal and professional lives of the three men, include: day books, customer account books, receipts, dog licenses, and ship enrollments/licenses. There are also records created and/or owned by various other members of the Whiton Family. These materials include property deeds, indentures, maps, customer account books, sermons, poems, and letters. Aside from the customer account book owned by Royal Whiton, these materials focus mostly on the personal lives of the Whiton family, including their deaths, marriages, and land owned/sold.

Arrangement

This collection is organized into the following four series:

- Series I. Isaiah Whiton Records, 1811-1864
- Series II. Lyman B. Whiton Records, 1870-1883
- Series III. Peter L. Whiton Records, 1865-1874
- Series IV. Miscellaneous Family Records, 1737-1872 and Undated
 - Subseries I. Deeds, Indentures, Accounts, and Maps, 1737-1858
 - Subseries II. Sermons, Letters, and Poems, 1823-1872

Series I. Isaiah Whiton Materials, 1811 – 1864

Box 1, Folders 1-3

This series is composed of three day books and several receipts that belonged to Isaiah Whiton (1789-1871). The day books, which date between 1811 and 1864, detail the financial transactions completed by Isaiah. They include labor and materials he provided to others as well as items and services received. The entries in each book are in chronological order. The receipts are for medical services on February 12, 1837, interest on Isaiah's investment in the Hingham Mutual Fire Insurance Company, his purchases from William J. Whiton (1811-1876) on March 6th and October 2nd of 1860, and materials Moses Cross bought from Isaiah on October 2, 1860.

Series II. Lyman B. Whiton Materials, 1870 - 1883

Box 1, Folders 4 and 5

This series contains two customer account books, two dog licenses, and two receipts belonging to Lyman B. Whiton (1834-1909). The two account books detail Lyman's transactions with the George Hersey Junior & Co. Store between 1870 and 1871 and Caleb S. Hunt's Store between 1870 and 1872. Each book notes his purchases at that store, including foodstuffs, household items, cleaning supplies, and cloth. The dog licenses were created in 1872 and 1879, with details about the dog being licensed only provided for the 1872 document. Finally, the two receipts show Lyman's subscription to *The*

Hingham Journal in 1879 and services received from the Hingham Water Co. from May to June of 1883.

Series III. Peter L. Whiton Materials, 1865-1874
Flat File Folder 1

This series contains eight enrollment/licensing forms for the operation of schooners owned, at least in part, by Peter L. Whiton (1816-1897) between 1865 and 1874. The forms provide such details as the ship owner, where and when the ship was built, its measurements and tonnage capacity, vessel type, and ship master. One of the ships, named Game Cock, was also partially owned by Bela H. Whiton (1816-1898). The items in the series are arranged in chronological order.

Series IV. Miscellaneous Family Records, 1737 - 1872 and Undated

Subseries I. Deeds, Indentures, Accounts and Maps, 1737-1859, and Undated
Box 1, Folders 6 and 7; Flat File Folder 2

This subseries contains deeds, indentures, account books, and maps relating to various members of the Whiton Family. The deeds and indentures date between 1737 and 1859. The oldest document is a deed of land sold by Enoch Whiton (b. 1699) of Hingham and Eleazar Whiton of Abington to Peter Hobart. Signatures on the deed include that of Benjamin Lincoln, who was acting as Justice of the Peace. There is also a 1773 indenture certificate that documents Elizabeth Whiton (b. 1736) contracting for the services of John Daniels. The two other deeds detail the selling of a piece of land belonging to Nathaniel Gardner of Hingham to Samuel Whiton (b. 1712/1713) in 1777 and an oversized 1859 property deed of land sold in Cohasset to Bela H. Whiton (1816-1898). Also included are two handwritten documents related to the aforementioned deed that were created on the same day. They state that the previous owner, John Manuel, agreed to pay a certain amount of money to Bela H. Whiton every year. The first document states that he would pay \$300 per year, while the second proclaimed the sum to be \$500.

There are two other items in this subseries. The first is a map entitled 'Land Plan for Cedar Swamp Given to Samuel Whiton, 1777'. It is unknown whether the date indicates the year the map was made or when the land was purchased, therefore the document is classified as undated. Finally, the subseries also contains the customer account book Royal Whiton (1792-1877) kept in order to track the purchases made by Mr. Riddle at his store. The transactions date between 1841 and 1842, showing that Mr. Riddle bought mostly foodstuffs, household items, and tools from Royal Whiton.

Subseries II. Sermons, Letters, and Poems, 1823-1872
Box 1, Folders 8 and 9

This subseries is composed of sermons, letters, and poems relating three different members of the Whiton family. There are two funeral sermon publications owned by Wilson Whiton, Jr. (1805-1873). The first is of a sermon given by Rev. Samuel J. May in Hingham on March 19, 1837 about the virtuous life and character of Mrs. Cecilia Brooks, who had died earlier that week. The publication also includes a short biography detailing important events in her life. The other sermon was given at the Third Parish in Hingham on the Sunday following the death of Wilson's cousin Thomas F. Whiton (1821-1872). The topic is the use of Christian discontent to

persevere and achieve divine contentment.

The other two items in this subseries are a letter and a poem. The letter was written in May of 1823 by Hannah S. Whiton (1778-1865) to her sister. It discusses the activities in the family, including marital statuses, pregnancies, and moves to new cities. The poem was written in 1853 by Mrs. A. Hersey for Hannah R. Whiton (1818-1860). It tells of the pain experienced by a parent after the death of his or her five-year-old daughter.