

Collection # 817

WHEELER - SMITH FAMILY
 Papers, 1814-1936; bulk 1864-1865
 2 boxes

Gift of Thoreau Raymond, February and December, 1992

The collection consists primarily of letters to and from Woodbury C. Smith, his father, Samuel Smith, and his wife, Helen Wheeler Smith and principally relates to the Civil War, discussing issues such as war news, contrabands, politics, both local to Massachusetts and national. There is a letter from Dorothea Dix as Superintendent of Women Nurses. There are slavery documents, field inspection and narrative reports from battle fronts in South Carolina and Florida, a map of Charleston Harbor, a photograph of the Raymonds and Helen Wheeler Smith and a gold \$1 coin from 1874.

Samuel Smith was a city clerk in Worcester, Massachusetts. His son, Woodbury Smith was Quartermaster in the Union Army, also Lieutenant and Captain and Judge. Helen Wheeler Smith was a war nurse and, according to the donor, came from a Quaker family in Potsdam or Canton, New York (though there is no evidence of Quaker connections anywhere in these papers). Again according to the donor, the daughter of Helen and Woodbury Smith, Harriet, and her mother left \$100 to the Spiritualist Society of Boston. The family lived in Worcester, Massachusetts until the mother and daughter moved to Brighton, Mass. Ward Raymond, Thoreau's father, was executor of Harriet's estate.

Box contents: Box I:

Letters to Helen Wheeler Smith

1. A-R
2. S-W

Letters from Samuel Smith

1. 1864
2. 1865-66

Letters to Samuel Smith

Box II:

Letters from Woodbury C. Smith

Letters to Woodbury and Woodbury and Helen

Documents and Miscellaneous

Envelopes (for titles and variant addresses of four Smith family members)

For further detail on the collection, see the finding aid which follows. (Items marked "+" indicate potential choices for History 361) For further background information, see the Wheeler-Smith file.

817 - Wheeler-Smith Family.

BOX I

Letters to Helen Wheeler Smith

- Baler, William. Washington, D.C., 1865. 1 item
 Balsler, Louise. June 29, 1865. 1 item
 Barnes, Lucie. May 2, 1878-? 3 items
 +Dix, D[orothea] L.. June 19. [n.d.] [allows her to go on the packet(ship) to Hilton Head as seamstress, but not to try to see her husband serving in Fla.]. 1 item
 +[Girds?], E[lizabeth], Del. Co. PA, Nov. 29 [186-]. [re Lieut. Gen. Dorothea Dix; women's hospital work]
 Graham, Nathaniel. Coohaw...? Bridge, Dec. 18, 1864? [soldier's view of fighting in Savannah]
 Grannis?, James H. Cosawhachy, Jan. 25, 1865. 1 item
 Hardy, Edward G. Fort Schuyler, n.d. 1 item
 Hine, P.E. Vienna, VA, June 2, 1866-Aug. 25, 1867. 2 items
 Leggett, Frank. Rochester, Nov. 27 1864-July 7, 186-? 2 items
 Northness?, Mary P. Canton, N.Y., Nov. 22, 1863. 1 item
 Nye, Abbie. May 22, 1865. 1 item
- Russell, Ruth. New Bedford Sept. 15, 1864. 1 item
 Sanders, Charles, Worcester, Dec. 25, 1864-Jan. 15, 1866. 3 items
 [Sanders], Lucy. Worcester, Aug. 26, 1855-Sept. 21, 1865.
 Smith, Ada. Brooklyn, Oct. 23, 1863. 1 item.
 Smith, Hattie. Buffalo, N.Y., Sept. 7, 1885. 1 item
 Wales, Chester. Syracuse, Aug. 30, 1860. 1 item.
 Wheeler, Carrie or Call. Potsdam, Mar. 8, 1862-Sept. 8, 1862. 2 items
 Wheeler family, including parents & siblings. Oct. 6, 1856-Dec. 15, 1857. 4 items
 Wheeler, T.J. (father) Exeter, Nebraska, Jan. 18, 1873. [re corn and wheat harvest] 1 item
 Wheeler, Helen E. (aunt of Helen Smith) Feb. 8, 1857. 1 item

Letters from Samuel Smith (father of Woodbury) to Woodbury, unless otherwise noted.

Worcester, MA, April 7, 1863 - March 12, 1866. 42 items

responses to war news; family news; +Apr. 18, 1864 [re Freedmen's Society, slavery issue, Colored Regiments, Civil War notables]; +Nov. 11, 1864 [paid poll tax for Eben Hemenway to allow his son Woodbury, to vote "by proxy" for Lincoln. Hemenway a 2nd generation Black from Worcester & delegate to 1864 Syracuse convention]; some political news;

+July 13, 1865 [the no. of whites truly loyal through the war is small; B lacks do & should vote and should be educated to do so]; +Dec. 17, 1865 [elections held; reception of General Grant in Savannah & Charleston; Woodbury's regiment returns home; +Nov. 23, 1865 [advises Woodbury as judge to give the rebels justice", for although some of them may be truly loyal, others may only be pretending, and would again opt for secession]

Letters to Samuel Smith

- Blackman, J.S. Leyden?, Nov. 21, 1842. 1 item
 Filley, M.L. Lansingburgh, May 22, 1845. 1 item

Porter, Wm. E. Hartford, Feb-Apr, 1846. 1 items
 Thayer, Samuel and Amelia. n.p., Apr. 4, 1848. 1 item
 Williams, W. Andover. Mar. - May, 1846. 2 items

BOX II

Letters from Woodbury Smith,

August 1862 - March 1866. 21 items

Letters to parents and wife while serving in the 35th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers near Alexandria, VA; Jacksonville, Fla & Georgetown, S.C.

Sees many contrabands; sees Helen's brother from the 6th NY Regiment; notes visit of Lincoln (Oct. 24, 1862); description of the ravages of war; compares John C. Fremont's fall from favor to that of Benedict Arnold's reports that he will take the place of -- and become an A.A.A. General, thus losing his judgeship (Mar. 18, 1866); seizure of liquor.

Letters to Woodbury Smith and to Woodbury & Helen Wheeler Smith and others

Conant?, S. (Capt. 3 US Colored Troops & Provost Marshal Gen'l's) Tallahassee, Fla., Aug. 21, 1865 to Woodbury. [re battle & personal]

+Hine, P.E. Vienna, VA, Aug. 39, 1868 [Grant's election, constitutional convention]

Krebs, Harry. Apr. 1, 1866-July 14, 1879. 5 items

+Charleston, S.C. [re getting army personnel paid; Company F; rations]; arrival home to Schuylkill Co, PA, difficulty of resuming civilian life; theme of difficulty in "fitting in" recurs]

Sanders, C.W. Camp Cherry Creek, CO, Oct. 26, 1879. 1 item. Life as surveyor and engineer, with comment about "bad Indians"

Smith, Hattie. Worcester, MA, Nov. 15, 1865-Aug. 22 [n.y.] [re local politics, etc.] 4 items

[Smith]?, Sarah. (sister of Woodbury) New Haven, Apr. 191865-? 2 items

+ [shock of Lincoln's assassination and many details]

+ [n.d.] city in which Woodbury is Prov. Marshal (Charleston) is under martial law

Miscellaneous

Photographs: The Raymonds and Helen W. Smith (cyanotype); 3 photos of Harriet F. Smith (daughter of Woodbury & Helen Smith) & her living room

Poems on the deaths of Woodbury Smith and Elisha Smith and Mrs. Capron

Documents

+1814, 1847. Revenue collection (very fragile)

+1826. Slave passengers on a ship from Georgetown to Charleston, S.C. (fragile)

1871. Woodbury Smith as executor of a will.

+1852. Sale of slave girl in Florida

+ [n.d.] Map, hand-colored, printed of Charleston Harbor during Civil War indicating gun emplacements

S.C. and Fla., July 7 - May 1, 1866. Field reports and inspection reports (some of which included 35th US Colored Troops). 30 items

supplies, events, such as condition of troops and copies of reports of +Maj. Anderson on "abandoning" Fort Moultrie and going to Fort Sumpter on the charge for an

explanation by J.B. Floyd, Secy of War (Dec. 27, 1860); +taking ship with prisoners; payments for various army needs, such as servants (Aug. 3, 1865);

four small documents, including a chit (printed) for 3 cents "Isaac T. Campbell" redeemable at bank and naming of negro slaves for "labor on the Coast" (July 20, 1863)

1936. Harriet Smith's estate schedule

Miscellaneous envelopes

unattached envelopes giving variant titles and addresses of 4 Smith family members