

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

A Guide to the Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers, 1799-1981

Summary Information

Repository

Albany Institute of History & Art Library

Creator

Albertine Hull Miller

Title

Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers, 1799-1981

Identifier

MG 78

Date

1799-1981

Physical Description

13 boxes; 9.25 linear feet

Physical Location

The materials are located onsite in the Museum.

Language of the Material

English

Abstract

The Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers contain the records of more than twenty-seven members of seven families connected by marriage over six generations whose lives were centered in Schodack Landing, a village along the Hudson River in Rensselaer County, New York.

This collection contains correspondence, personal papers, financial papers, photographs, and scrapbooks.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers, 1799-1981, MG 78. Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Albany, New York.

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Restrictions on Access

None

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession: #MG 78

Accession Source/Date: Gift of Hildreth Houston Spencer, in memory of Cornelia Hull Miller Spencer and Elizabeth Frances Hull, 1997

Processing Information

Finding aid updated by H. Cox, September 2020.

Biographical/Historical

The Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers contain the records of more than twenty-seven members of seven families connected by marriage over six generations whose lives were centered in Schodack Landing, a village along the Hudson River in Rensselaer County, New York.

A brief genealogy of the family is as follows. Principal correspondents in the collection are underlined.

William ASHLEY (1763-1847) m. 1787 Nancy Pomeroy (1761-circa 1795)
 Mary [Polly] (1788-1852) m. 1811 John Isaac VAN ALSTYNE (1778-1834)
 Sarah Ann (1812- ?) m. Davis BALDWIN - 1 child
 Albertine Mariah (1814-1886) m. 1834 Frederick FITCH (1803-1890)
 John, Mary, Chester, Chester, Chester [all died in infancy]
 Sarah [Sate] Baldwin (1850-1932) m. 1872 William Seward HULL (1839-1898)
 Albertine Cornelia (1872-1955) m. 1893 F. Benton MILLER (1868-1954)
 Cornelia Hull (1895-1990) m. 1921 James H. SPENCER (1895-1967)
 Hildreth Houston (1927-2018)
 Warren Seward (1897-1976) m. 1932 Dorothy Jackes (1898-1983)
 William Ashley (1816-1867) m. Maria Wright [Houston, Texas] - 3 children
 Lauriette (1818-1838)
 John (1820-1821)
 John Alexander (circa 1822- unknown death) m. Sarah White [Texas] - 1 child
 Mary Elizabeth (1824-1865) m. Paul BREMOND [Houston, Texas] - 5 children
 William, Jr. (1789-1811) [drowned, Nova Scotia]
 Chester (1791-1848) [US Senator, Arkansas] m. 1821 Mary Elliot (1798-1865) - 6 children
 Elisha Pomeroy (1792-1848) m. 1817 Catherine Osterhoudt - 3 children
 Clarissa (1794)
William ASHLEY (1763-1847) m. Jerusha Leonard (1769-1814)
 Pliny (1801)
 Lauriette (1803-1870)
William ASHLEY (1763-1847) m. Sarah Osterhoudt (1777-1847)

Scope and Contents

The Ashley/Van Alstyne/Fitch/Hull Family Papers spans the period from 1799-1981 and contains correspondence, documents and photographs relating to the lives of members of the Ashley, Baldwin, Fitch, Hull, Miller, Spencer and Van Alstyne families. The collection is divided into 5 series: Correspondence, Personal Papers, Financial Papers, Photographs, and Scrapbooks.

Family Correspondence, 1799-1981, contains letters written to family members, primarily from other family members, during the period 1799 through 1981. It is arranged alphabetically by the recipient. The largest portion of the letters were written to Mary Ashley Van Alstyne by four of her seven children, her half-sister Lauriette Ashley, and various other relatives. The series is arranged alphabetically by the recipient's name. Life span dates are provided to aid in identification of family members and their generation.

An important group of letters in the correspondence series is that of nearly 150 pieces written by William Seward Hull (1839-1898) during his service in the Civil War. Hull joined the 128th Regiment of New York Volunteers on September 5, 1862 and was mustered out on July 12, 1865. His letters are written primarily to his mother, Cornelia Lasher Hull, though some are also addressed to his father Hiram. He also wrote to his

three young sisters Mary, Elizabeth and Iantha. Hull's letters are highly personal, giving his views of fellow soldiers, politics, generals and racial matters, as well as news of troop movements, engagements and expeditions.

A second group of wartime letters can be found in Box 3, folders 53-55, written by Seaman 2nd Class Warren Seward Miller to his mother Albertine Hull Miller during World War I. Miller was stationed in Illinois, Philadelphia and England, but never saw battle.

Personal Papers, 1816-1965, holds documents, albums, invitations, diaries and clippings kept by the family members. The series contains family material gathered in the 1920s by Albertine Hull Miller, such as her hand-written genealogy, documentation on family furniture and artifacts, and the notes that she had tied to bundles of letters in this archive. The series is arranged alphabetically by family members, followed by two folders of Miscellaneous Ephemera and Miscellaneous Newspapers.

Financial Papers, 1801-1854, contains bills, receipts and other financial papers of John I. Van Alstyne, his wife Mary Ashley Van Alstyne, and six of their children. There is a small collection of expense records for the firm of Schemerhorn and Van Alstyne, as well as a group of documents and correspondence relating to the estate of John Van Alstyne.

Photographs, circa 1845-1960, holds images of the family members in a variety of formats, including daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, albumen prints and snapshots. Most are identified and came to the Library already labelled by Albertine Hull Miller. A series of nine real photo postcards records the village and area around Schodack Landing in the early twentieth century.

Scrapbooks, 1877-circa 1898, holds three albums put together by Albertine Hull Miller during the period 1877-1898. The dates of the scrapbooks were established by inscriptions in or on the books, or dates appearing on trade cards pasted within.

Contents List

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Description	Box	Folder
Family Correspondence, 1799-1981		
Lauriette Ashley (1803-1870)		
Letters from Rev. Isaac Tuttle [removed from her copy of Edwards, <i>Candid Reasons for Renouncing...</i> 1804], 1857, 1869	1	1
Letters from George Watkins, 1835, 1837		2
William Ashley (1763-1847)		
Letters from William Ashley, Jr., with testimony of Stephen Batson, Eastport, 1811		3

Mary Van Alstyne Bremond (1824-1865)		
Letter from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 22 May 1850		4
Sarah Van Alstyne Baldwin (1812-death unknown)		
Letters from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 1836-1837		5
Letters from John Van Alstyne, 1827-1829		6
Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch (1814-1886)		
Letter from Lauriette Ashley, 11 September 1855		7
Letter from Sarah Van Alstyne Baldwin, undated		8
Letters from Frederick Fitch, 1853-1855		9
Letter from John Van Alstyne, 24 September 1831		10
Letters from Mary Ashley Van Alstyne, 1829, circa 1849		11
Letter from William Ashley Van Alstyne, 21 May 1861		12
Empty envelopes, 1880s		13
Frederick Fitch (1803-1890)		
Letter from Davis Baldwin, 7 May 1852		14
Letters from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 1867		15
Letters from Sarah Fitch Hull, 1887		16
Empty envelopes, 1880s		17
Cornelia Lasher Hull (1817-1912)		
Letter from Simeon Bryant, 24 October 1864		18
Letter from Asa Hull, 20 April 1857		19
Letter from Mary (May) Hull, 19 May 1865		20
Letters from William Seward Hull, 1862-1865, undated		21-30
Letters from George Wilbur, 1863-1864		31
Iantha Hull (1847-1934)		
Letters from William Seward Hull, 1862-1865	2	1
Letter from Warren Seward Miller, 24 November 1918		2
Mary (May) (1854-1872) and Elizabeth Hull (1858-1945)		
Letter from Sarah Fitch Hull, 28 May 1896		3
Letters from William Seward Hull, 1863-1864		4
Letter to a friend, 28 January 1870		5
Sarah (Sate) Fitch Hull (1850-1932)		
Letters from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 1886, 1913		6
Letters from Frederick Fitch, 1886-1890		7
Letters from William Seward Hull, circa 1871		8
Letters from Julia S. Johnson, 1917-1918		9
Letters from Warren Seward Miller, 1918		10
Letter from Fanny Rosemond, 22 December 1888		11
Letters from Cornelia Miller Spencer, 1907-1918		12
Letters from Emma and Sarah (cousin, otherwise unidentified), April 1906		13
Empty envelopes, 1880s-1910s		14
Valentines, circa 1865		15
William Seward Hull (1839-1898)		
Letter from George W. Herrick, 21 November 1864		16
Telegram from Sarah Fitch Hull, 25 August 1886		17
Letters from Albertine Hull Miller, 1878, undated		18

Albertine Hull Miller (1872-1955)		
Christmas, New Years, and Easter cards, 1880s		19
Letter from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 1 January 1886		20
Letter from Frederick Fitch, 7 December 1889	3	1
Letters from Warren Seward Miller, 1918-1919		2-4
Cornelia Miller Spencer (1895-1990)		
Letters from museums in New York State and St. Louis, 1974-1981		5
Notes from aunts, 1927		6
John Isaac Van Alstyne (1778-1834)		
Letters from William Ashley, 1811-1812		7
Letters from Sarah Van Alstyne Baldwin, 1827		8
Letter from Elli Dorland, 22 August 1799		9
Lauriette Van Alstyne (1818-1838)		
Letter from Edwin Doolittle, 5 November 1836		10
Mary Ashley Van Alstyne (1788-1852)		
Letter from Chester Ashley, 19 June 1819		11
Letters from Lauriette Ashley, 1826-1850		12
Letter from William Ashley, 28 March 1839		13
Letter from William Ashley, Jr., 9 October 1807		14
Letters from Davis Baldwin, 1845, 1851		15
Letters from Sarah Van Alstyne Baldwin, 1838-1840		16
Letter from John Bloodgood, 19 July 1839		17
Letter from Isaac G. Cutler, 4 November 1809		18
Letter from Maria Elliot, 1 May 1848		19
Letters from Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch, 1839, undated		20
Letters from Frederick Fitch, 1839		21
Letter from Sally Fitch, 22 August 1809		22
Letter from John Koon, 26 July 1839		23
Letter from John Alexander Van Alstyne, 18 June 1851		24
Letter from John Isaac Van Alstyne, 8 March 1821		25
Letters from William Ashley Van Alstyne, 1837-1852		26-27
William Ashley Van Alstyne (1816-1847)		
Letter from John Koon, 23 July 1844		28
Personal Papers, 1816-1965		
Lauriette Ashley		
Invitations and Davis Baldwin memento, 1828-1864, undated	4	1
Valentines (cut and woven paper) and pierced paper wreath [removed from her copy of Watts, <i>Psalms Carefully Suited to the Christian Worship</i> , 1805], undated		2
William Ashley		
Invitation and admission ticket to Bowen's Phenix Museum, Boston, 1816		3
Sarah Van Alstyne Baldwin		
Poem by Captain Norman, undated		4
Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch		
Friendship album, 1831-1834		5
Prenuptial agreement, 1834		6

Frederick Fitch		
Cemetery documents, 1866, 1875		7
Miscellaneous receipts, 1850-80		8
Pew rent slips, 1885-1890		9
Real estate documents, 1854-1876		10
Elizabeth Hull		
Vermont Society of Colonial Dames membership ticket, undated		11
Sarah Fitch Hull		
Autograph album from Pittsfield Female Collegiate Institute, 1867		12
Diary: trip to Italy and England (volume 2 of 2 only), 1914		13
Fractional currency, circa 1864		14
Invitations to commencement and wedding, 1869, 1872		15
William Seward Hull		
Confederate Army muster roll, 1864		16
Military appointment papers, 1862-1863		17
Newspaper clippings related to Civil War, 1861, undated		18
Obituary, 1898		19
1) 128th Regiment memorial keepsake, Georgia dollar and Savannah-New Orleans rail ticket, 1863, undated		20
2) 128th Regiment Company G, New York Volunteer Infantry Soldiers' Memorial, broadside, 1863, See: Box 11		
3) 128th Regiment Company G, New York Volunteer Infantry Military Register, broadside, 1864, See: Box 11		
Sons of Temperance papers, 1869-1870		21
Albertine Hull Miller		
Autograph album, 1884-1889		22
Cemetery document, 20 November 1946		23
Clippings re: Isaac Hull, James Spencer, Warren Miller, 1930-65, undated		24
Clippings and ephemera related to Schodack Landing and Rensselaer County, 1927-1950		25
Clippings and ephemera related to World War I, 1915, undated		26
Daughters of the American Revolution membership papers, 1921	5	1
Diary: account of New Orleans Exposition, 1884		2
F. Benton Miller mementos, 1954, undated		3
Family genealogy and record sheets, with section on family heirlooms and collections, 1850s, 1920s		4
Invitations		
Graduation and wedding, with clipping, 1892-1893		5
Wedding of Cornelia Miller Spencer, 1921		6
Lock of hair, 1879		7
Notes formerly tied on bundles of family letters, 1920s		8
Notes on furniture and antiques, 1933, undated		9
Writings		
Essays, undated		10
Poems, 1939, undated		11
Poems accepted for publication, with correspondence, 1921-39,		12

undated		
Lauriette Van Alstyne		
Friendship album, 1832-34		13
Mary Ashley Van Alstyne		
Copy of <i>The Arkansas State Democrat</i> with coverage of the death of Chester Ashley, 12 May 1848		14
Funeral announcement for William A. Van Alstyne, April 1867		15
Pew rent slip, 27 November 1841		16
Miscellaneous Ephemera, 1850-1884, undated		17
Miscellaneous Newspapers		
Full Issues		
<i>Albany Journal</i> , 19 July 1853		18
<i>Brother Jonathan</i> , 28 August 1841		19
<i>Buffalo Commercial Advertiser</i> , Millard Fillmore memorial edition, 8 March 1874		20
<i>Harper's Weekly</i> , 9 May 1874		21
<i>New York Herald</i> , Abraham Lincoln memorial edition [reprint], undated		22
<i>St. Louis Republic</i> , George Washington inauguration centennial edition, 29 April 1889		23
Financial Papers, 1801-1854		
Bills and Receipts		
Farm expenses		
Supplies, seeds, etc., 1821-1831, undated	6	1
Taxes, surveys and insurance, 1828-1833		2
Upkeep of properties and equipment, 1819-1832		3
Wool and leather, 1826-1830		4
Household expenses		
Accounts with Jacob A. Ten Eyck, Albany (general merchandise), 1823-1828		5
Accounts with Agur Wells, Albany (shoes and leather repair), 1816-1830		6
General accounts, 1819-1838		7
Medical and funeral accounts, 1807-1838		8
Subscriptions for newspapers, 1819-1831		9
Tuition, books, paper, and boarding, 1818-1832		10
Upkeep of properties (repairs, paint, etc.), 1818-1832		11
Legal fees, 1819-1834		12
Store expenses, Schemerhorn and Van Alstyne		
Receipt book, 1801-1807		13
Receipt book, 1807-1819		14
Receipts for barrels of cider and rent, 1819-20, undated	7	1
Miscellaneous receipts and notes, 1807-1833		2
Real Estate Transactions		
Buying and selling		
With Edmonds family, 1817-1821		3
With Gardenier family, 1810-1815		4
With James Quilhot, 1817-1833		5

Rental properties, 1811-1831		6
Miscellaneous, 1812-1834		7
Estate of John Isaac Van Alstyne		
Edmund Fitch receipts, 1834-1835		8
Memorandum re: derelictions		9
Miscellaneous accounts, deeds, etc., 1834-1852		10
Mary Van Alstyne's notes, undated		11
Real estate transactions with Van Alstyne children, 1835-1854		12
Miscellaneous Documents, 1804-1815, undated		13
Photographs, circa 1845-1960		
Albertine Van Alstyne Fitch		
1/9 plate ambrotype (inscribed in pencil inside case: My Mother, Pokeepsie [sic] Oct 10, 1866); two cabinet card portraits by A. Rino, 1866, circa 1880	8	1
Frederick Fitch		
Cabinet card portrait by McDonnald and Sterry, Albany, circa 1880		2
Simeon Fitch		
1/4 plate ambrotype, circa 1855		3
David French		
Oval ivorytype, circa 1857		4
Cornelia Lasher Hull		
Group portrait with her two sisters in oval frame, circa 1860	12	
Group portrait with Sarah Hull, Albertine Miller, and Cornelia Spencer; with modern copy print, 1896 August	12	
Cabinet card portrait by Forshew, Hudson, circa 1890	8	5
Elizabeth Frances Hull		
1/6 plate tinted ambrotype; albumen portrait; snapshot, circa 1863-1941		6
Frances Hildreth Hull		
1/6 plate daguerreotype, circa 1845		7
Iantha Hull with her cat		
Two 1/6 plate daguerreotypes (one inscribed in pencil inside case: Iantha Hull taken by Mr. Nickols Ambrotype, Stuyvesant, New York), circa 1849		8
Mary Hull		
Two carte de visite portraits by T.S. Estabrook, New York, circa 1870	9	1
S.B. Hull		
Carte de visite portrait by J.L. Abbott, Albany, October 1875		2
Sarah Fitch Hull		
Cabinet card portrait by McDonnald and Sterry, Albany, circa 1879		3
William Seward Hull		
1/4 plate tintype portrait with his dog "Dandy" and a fellow soldier; cabinet card portrait by G. Cramer, St. Louis; albumen portrait, circa 1865-80		4
Albumen portrait with knapsack, in oval walnut frame, circa 1863	13	

William Seward and Sarah Fitch Hull		
Carte de visite portrait taken in Pocahontas and Blue Beard costumes, by Forshew, Hudson, circa 1871	9	5
Albertine Hull Miller		
Four portraits: carte de visite by Forshew, Hudson; cabinet card by Forshew, cabinet card by McDonnald and Sterry; and carte de visite by Cramer, circa 1872-1878		6
Warren Seward Miller		
Snapshot with friend, circa 1918		7
Cornelia Miller Spencer		
Portrait by Starke, St. Louis, circa 1901		8
Unidentified Men		
Carte de visite portraits: two of Civil War soldier by Brady, Washington; portrait by T.D. Tooker, Newark, NY; portrait by E.S. Dunshee, Rochester, circa 1864, undated		9
Unidentified Women		
Oval tintype; two carte de visite portraits by Powelson and E.S. Dunshee, Rochester and one unlabeled, undated		10
Schodack Landing, New York		
Nine real photo postcards of the village; one snapshot of the Fitch house; two snapshots of the Fitch family tombstone, circa 1910-60s		11
Stereocards		
Seventeen stereocards, some inscribed on their verso to Iantha and Cornelia Hull from David. Views include commercial card scenes of Havana Glen, NY, views on the New York and New Haven Railroad, and unidentified churches and houses with people. Four of the cards were made by photographers in Norwalk and Meriden, CT [possibly Fitch family members?]. One card is inscribed "City of Albany" and appears to be a paddle boat on the Hudson River, circa 1865		12
Scrapbooks, 1877-circa 1898		
Three scrapbooks assembled by Albertine Hull Miller; arranged in chronological order.		
Scrapbook with inscription, 13 January 1877		10
Scrapbook with dated and decorated binding, 7 December 1879		
Scrapbook with fabric pages and felted cover, circa 1898		