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.
Prefered Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:


Conditions Governing Access and Use

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


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 (1863-1847) 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.

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**Contents List**

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- 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  
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- Group portrait with Sarah Hull, Albertine Miller, and Cornelia Spencer; with modern copy print, 1896 August
- 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

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- 1/6 plate daguerreotype, circa 1845  
- 7

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**Sarah Fitch Hull**
- Cabinet card portrait by McDonnald and Sterry, Albany, circa 1879  
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- 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
- Albumen portrait with knapsack, in oval walnut frame, circa 1863  
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>William Seward and Sarah Fitch Hull</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carte de visite portrait taken in Pocahontas and Blue Beard costumes, by Forshew, Hudson, circa 1871</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albright Hull Miller</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warren Seward Miller</td>
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<td>Snapshot with friend, circa 1918</td>
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<td>Portrait by Starke, St. Louis, circa 1901</td>
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<td>Unidentified Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unidentified Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oval tintype; two carte de visite portraits by Powelson and E.S. Dunshee, Rochester and one unlabeled, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schodack Landing, New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nine real photo postcards of the village; one snapshot of the Fitch house; two snapshots of the Fitch family tombstone, circa1910-60s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stereocards</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scrapbooks, 1877-circa 1898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three scrapbooks assembled by Albright Hull Miller; arranged in chronological order.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scrapbook with inscription, 13 January 1877</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scrapbook with dated and decorated binding, 7 December 1879</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scrapbook with fabric pages and felted cover, circa 1898</td>
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