

A Guide to the Manuscript Collections at the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center

Manuscript materials, largely personal correspondence but including diaries, journals, and literary manuscripts by Harriet Beecher Stowe and other Nook Farm residents, are so numerous that only major correspondents are noted. Because of their fame and wide-ranging interests Stowe, Charles Dudley Warner, and Isabella Beecher Hooker were the recipients of letters from many famous people in the United States and Europe. The collection has letters from such historical figures as Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Edward Everett Hale, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Dean Howells, Julia Ward Howe, Charles Dickens, Lady Byron, and the Duchess of Sutherland.

Stowe Manuscripts

Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), author

Several hundred letters and many diaries, journals, and sketchbooks ranging from 1822 to 1894. Included among these are five of the 14 known manuscript pages from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a travel journal and sketchbook with a rough draft for portions of *Agnes of Sorrento*, a 17-page manuscript of *House and Home Papers*, one manuscript page of *Oldtown Folks*, and another of *Palmetto Leaves*.

The *John R. Howard Collection* contains letters Stowe wrote to her friend, advisor, and *Christian Union* publisher, John Raymond Howard, dating from the 1860s – 1880s which provide an in-depth glimpse into the author's later business affairs. The *Philip Sang Collection* includes letters from Stowe's everyday life, like an Easter letter to her grandson and another to the Gas Company in Hartford, and more unusual letters including one where she denies Josiah Henson was the model for "Uncle Tom" as he claimed

The *E. Bruce Kirkham Collection* of annotated Stowe letters (1822-1895) consists of notebooks, copies of letters, correspondence, clippings, microfilm, and an electronic database of the annotated letters concerning the life and times of Stowe and her family.

Many first editions and foreign editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in over 40 languages. Advertising broadsides, programs, and sheet music for the numerous dramatizations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the *Harry Birdoff Collection*.

Calvin Ellis Stowe (1802-1886), theologian and educator

A few hundred letters and bound manuscripts written by Harriet Beecher Stowe's well-known husband. Lecture notes, sermon drafts, and notes for his *Origin and History of the Books of the Bible* comprise the manuscript holdings.

Beecher Family

Lyman Beecher (1775-1863), minister

Letters dating from 1802 to 1860 written by Stowe's influential father, and letters by his three wives: Roxana Foote Beecher, Harriet Porter Beecher, and Lydia Beals Jackson Beecher.

Catharine E. Beecher (1800-1787), educator

60 letters and manuscripts from 1817? to 1878, including annual reports, diplomas, and student letters of the Hartford Female Seminary, which she founded in 1824.

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), minister

Over 100 letters by Stowe's most famous brother, as well as biographies and period material on the Beecher-Tilton scandal and transcripts of its trials.

Thomas K. Beecher (1824-1900), minister

Over 200 letters (including those written during the Civil War to Union nurse, Ella Louise Wolcott), sermons and lectures from 1836 to 1894. Six scrapbooks contain clippings of the weekly column, "Miscellany," which he wrote for the *Elmira Gazette*, and other clippings about him as pastor of the Park Church in Elmira, New York.

Charles Beecher (1815-1900), minister

About 40 letters discussing religious beliefs written between brothers Charles and Thomas Beecher, ranging from 1825 to 1844 in the *Thacher Collection*.

Mary Beecher Perkins (1805-1900)

Over 100 letters from 1818 to 1889, including letters written during a European trip with her sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, in 1856.

William H. Beecher (1802-1889)

Edward Beecher (1803-1895)

George Beecher (1807-1843)

and James C. Beecher (1828-1886), ministers

The collection holds small groups of letters ranging from 1828-1898 by each.

Hooker Family

Thomas Hooker (1586?-1647), minister and founder of Hartford

The earliest Hooker material is a small collection of sermons and tracts, mostly London imprints.

John Hooker (1816-1901), lawyer

Over 1,000 letters extending from the 1830s until his death cover legal affairs, the settlement of Nook Farm, and woman's rights. Of special interest is a journal kept of his trip in 1836-1837 to Asia.

Isabella Beecher Hooker (1822-1907), suffragist

The collection dates from 1834 through 1907 and numbers over 1,000 items. From 1869 on Hooker corresponded with such suffrage leaders as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Olympia Brown, and Paulina Wright Davis. Included are approximately 400 letters by suffrage leaders and activists, of which 103 are by Susan B. Anthony and 53 by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. It also has numerous pamphlets and tracts on the woman suffrage movement. Additional material---letters, diaries, a journal---numbers about 500 items, many of which are family correspondence.

Mary Hooker Burton (1845-1886) and Alice Hooker Day (1847-1928)

Letters by and to the daughters of John and Isabella Beecher Hooker.

Katharine Seymour Day Collection

Katharine Seymour Day (1870-1964), philanthropist and artist

The largest single collection of papers in the Stowe Center's collection comprises the extensive correspondence by and to Katharine S. Day, founder of the Stowe Center, with family members, numerous friends, and associates. Included are extensive materials compiled when she was a student: notebooks, themes and drafts of a master's thesis. Other materials reflect her wide-ranging interests in social and political reform.

John Calvin Day Collection

John Calvin Day (1835-1899), lawyer

Extensive personal and business correspondence and legal documents of Hartford attorney (and father of Katharine Seymour Day), active in the Republican party. Also included are the diaries he kept from 1887 to 1894 when he traveled and lived in Europe.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman Papers

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935), social reformer

A small selection of her letters and the typescript of *The Science of Human Conduct* as well as a selection of her published works.

Foote Collection

Papers, photographs, and print materials by, to, and about the families of Eli Foote (1747-1792) of Guilford, Connecticut, and Samuel Edmund Foote (1787-1858) of Guilford and Cincinnati, Ohio. Included are letters by Harriet Foote Hawley (1831-1886), civil war nurse and wife of General Joseph R. Hawley.

Gillette (Gillet, Gillett) Collection

Joseph Gillet (1756-1842)

The earliest letters of the Gillette family date from the late 18th century and consist of correspondence between Joseph and his son Martin.

Martin Gillet (1787-1836)

The papers of Martin contain vivid descriptions of military maneuvers of the War of 1812, including one of an 1814 battle near Baltimore.

Francis Gillette (1807-1879), senator

The letters of Francis and Elisabeth Hooker Gillette are informative about the founding of Nook Farm.

William H. Gillette Collection

William H. Gillette (1853-1937), actor and playwright

The Stowe Center holds the largest collection of letters, manuscripts, typescripts, and playscripts of the actor-playwright who made Sherlock Holmes famous on the stage. In addition, hundreds of photographs from his various plays; at his estate “Seventh Sister” (Gillette Castle) in Hadlyme, Connecticut; on his boat, “Aunt Polly”; as well as numerous scrapbooks he compiled throughout his long career in the theatre.

In addition, the *Doris E. Cook Collection* consists of letters, articles, pamphlets and related material acquired by the donor while writing a biography of William Gillette, 1970.

Keller Collection

George Keller (1842-1935), architect

The collection consists of manuscripts by and to Keller and members of his family. The 440 manuscripts, dated 1866-1933, include letters, manuscripts, documents, scrapbooks, and a letter book. In addition, the collection has 24 original architectural drawings, dated 1885-1931, a small photograph selection of the Keller family and of Keller buildings, and photographs of buildings that interested him.

Langdon Collection

The collection has correspondence by and to the in-laws of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), Jervis Langdon (1804-1870), Olivia Lewis Langdon (1810-1890), and Charles Jervis Langdon (1849-1916).

Warner Family

Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900), editor and writer

The collection contains correspondence from 1866 to 1898 and includes letters by his wife Susan Lee Warner (1838-1921). In the collection are published works, including 10 pages of *The Gilded Age*.

Elisabeth “Lilly” Gillette Warner (1838-1915)

Charles Dudley Warner’s sister-in-law Lilly corresponded nearly everyday with her husband George H. Warner from 1867 to 1888, and her journal provides insights into Nook Farm and its residents.

George H. Warner (1833-1919), businessman

The collection includes letters from 1848 to 1904 regarding the American Emigrant Company, Des Moines, Iowa, and Nook Farm happenings.

Margaret Warner Morley Collection

Margaret Warner Morley (1858-1923), educator and author

This collection consists of travel logs and sketchbooks of rural North Carolina, and book manuscripts by the author of *The Carolina Mountains* (1913).

Higginson Collection

Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911), minister and editor

Letters by 18 correspondents to the Rev. Higginson illustrate the political aspects of the abolitionist movement.

Chester Faxon, Jewett, Reynolds, and Talcott Collections

These collections develop the contrasts among the family members who settled in New York and in the Western Reserve and those who remained in their native Connecticut. The Talcott Collection includes family genealogy.

Saturday Morning Club, Hartford, Collection

Correspondence, meeting minutes, programs, and related material of a women's literary club (1876 to present).

Hartford Art Club Collection

The collection consists of the archival materials of this art history organization (1901-1945).

The American Mills, Kingsbury, Ripleys & Talcott., and Edwin and Daniel Wesson Collections

These collections deal with the development of American industry from 1770 to the late 19th century. The Kingsbury Collection dates to colonial times. The Wesson Collection contains business and patent papers of the early gunsmiths in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Cookbook Collection

Ten hand-written cookbooks used by Hartford and Connecticut women dating from the 19th century, the earliest in 1815.