

# Guide to the Bates Family Papers

MS 65



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

July 1981

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 65

**CREATOR:** Bates family

**TITLE:** Bates family papers

**DATES:** 1788-1880

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Miscellaneous papers of the Bates family of Springfield, Massachusetts. One of the two principal figures is Elijah Bates (Y:1794) with accounts of his expenses at Yale College, some notes on his reading and the text of a play in which he took part. Isaac Chapman Bates (Y:1802) is represented with a petition to the president of Yale College, two letters and an obituary notice.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0065>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0065>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of W.B. Greenough, 1944, and of Gelston Hardy, 1965; further material purchased in 1968.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

Bates Family Papers (MS 65). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

ELIJAH BATES (1770-1850), the eldest child of Captain Nathaniel and Hannah Bates, of (East) Granville, Massachusetts, and grandson of John and Edith Bates, of Durham, Connecticut, was born in Granville on July 27, 1770. His mother was a daughter of Jonathan and Abigail (White) Church. Isaac C. Bates (Yale 1802) was a first cousin.

He received his B.A. from Yale in 1794. He studied law with Judge Tapping Reeve in Litchfield, Connecticut, and also in the office of Joseph Lyman (Yale 1783), of Westfield.

He established himself in practice in Westfield with Isaac C. Bates (B.A. Yale, 1802), which adjoins his native town, but from the first indulged a passion for agricultural pursuits, which interfered seriously with his professional success.

He was one of the foremost in the enterprise of opening a good highway from Westfield to Albany, and did much of the work in his vicinity at his own expense.

As a citizen he was public spirited and enterprising; one of the kindest of neighbors and most honest of men.

He was a member of the State Senate for one or more sessions. He served in the General Court of Mass. (1808-1809), U.S. House of Reps. (1827-1935), State Legislature, (1835-1837), Governor's Counsel, U.S. Senate (1841-1845).

For many years he limited his professional labors mainly to the winter months, devoting the summer to his favorite out-of-door pursuits; and in 1825, when his elder son began law studies, he made his retirement final.

He died in Westfield on February 4, 1850, in his 80th year.

He married, on June 15, 1800, Mary (or Polly), eldest daughter of Dr. Israel Ashley (Yale 1767), of Westfield, who died on July 10, 1845, aged 75 years.

Their children were two sons and one daughter, all of whom survived their parents. The elder son graduated from Yale in 1825.

ISAAC CHAPMAN BATES (1779-1845) was a son of Colonel Jacob and Ruth Bates of Granville, Massachusetts, and a first cousin of Elijah Bates (Yale 1794). His mother was a daughter of Phineas Robinson of Granville, and widow of Isaac Chapman, who died on November, 1776. He was born in Granville on January 23, 1779, and was prepared for College by the Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Cooley (Yale 1792), who had

married his half-sister. An excellent scholar in College, and distinguished as a writer and speaker, he was chosen to deliver the Valedictory Oration at graduation.

He studied law in New Haven with Seth P. Staples (Yale 1797), and afterwards with Judge Samuel Hinckley (Yale 1781), of Northampton, where he was admitted to the bar at the May term in 1805. An oration which he delivered on the fourth of July brought him at once into favorable notice, and he soon took a prominent rank among the practitioners in Western Massachusetts. His striking personal advantages, a commanding presence, a rich, silvery voice, and graceful address, joined with a power of manly and lucid argument, made him especially effective as an advocate before a jury.

He was not only much employed in professional, but also in civil life. In 1808-09, and once subsequently, he was a Representative in the General Court of Massachusetts; and in December, 1827, he took his seat as a Representative in Congress (anti-Jackson), where he was continued for eight years, and then declined a re-election. After this he served again as a member of the State Legislature, and was for two years in the Governor's Council. He served as a presidential elector in 1836 and 1840.

In January, 1841, he was elected to the Senate of the United States, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of the Hon. John Davis (Yale 1812), who had just been chosen Governor. When this term had expired, he was elected Senator for the next six years (1841-47), but did not live to finish his term. He had been much overworked in the discharge of his duties, and in February, 1845, made an able speech, opposing the admission of Texas. Though ill, he appeared in his seat for the last time on the last day of that month, and he died in Washington on March 16, in his 67th year.

His colleague in the Senate, Daniel Webster, in announcing his death, paid a high tribute to his ability and eloquence.

He married, on September 21, 1807, Martha, the eldest child of Judge Samuel Henshaw (Harvard 1773) and Martha (Hunt) Henshaw, of Boston and Northampton, who died in Northampton on November 9, 1874, in her 92d year.

They had five daughters and three sons. The eldest daughter married the Rev. Fordyce M. Hubbard (Williams Coll. 1828); the second daughter married the Hon. Samuel H. Walley (Harvard 1826); the third daughter married Lewis J. Dudley (Yale 1838); the fourth daughter married Haynes H. Chilson (Amherst Coll. 1843); and the youngest married, first, Charles F. Smith (Amherst 1838), and secondly, John A. Dana (Yale 1844). The eldest son was graduated here in 1833; the youngest died in infancy.

(F. B. Dexter, *Yale Biographies and Annals*, 1795-1805, pages 470-1805)

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## Scope and Contents

This collection contains a small amount of material concerning members of the Bates family of Springfield, Massachusetts. Included are a few items of correspondence, a journal of court cases in Springfield, and papers relating to the Yale careers of Elijah Bates (class of 1794) and Isaac C. Bates (class of 1802).

The papers were acquired through gifts from W. B. Greenough in 1944, from Gelston Hardy in 1965, and by purchase in 1968.

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## Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Ashley, John (1736-1799). Photostatic copy of his appointed as major general in the Massachusetts militia	1788 November 19
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Bates, Elijah (1770-1850; Y. 1794)		
b. 1, f. 2	Account of expenses in Yale College with some notes on his reading	1790, 1794
b. 1, f. 3	Play produced at Quarter Day, 1793 Mar 13, in which E. Bates took part	[1793?]
b. 1, f. 4	Journal of court cases at Springfield, Hampden Co., Mass., possibly kept by E. Bates	1815 August-1828 November
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Bates, Isaac Chapman (1779-1845; Y. 1802)		
b. 1, f. 5	AMS, petition to the President of Yale College	[1800-1801?]
b. 1, f. 6	ALS to Hm. E. Lane [i.e. Ebenezer Lane (1793-1866)?]	1835
b. 1, f. 6	ALS to Thomas Aspinvale	1841
b. 1, f. 6	Obituary notice	1845
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Bates, William Gelston (1803-1880; Y. 1825)		
b. 1, f. 7	Photostatic copy of ALS to his mother, Mary (Ashley) Bates [Mrs. Elijah Bates]	1824
b. 1, f. 8	Photostatic copy of eulogy in the <i>Springfield Daily Republican</i>	1880 December 7
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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Families  
Law

### **Geographic Names**

Springfield (Mass.)

### **Names**

Bates, Elijah, 1770-1850  
Bates, Isaac Chapman, 1780-1845

### **Families**

Bates family

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1794  
Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1802  
Yale University -- Students