

# Guide to the Leffingwell Family Papers

MS 320



compiled by Diane Kaplan

December 1975

Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 320

**CREATOR:** Leffingwell family

**TITLE:** Leffingwell family papers

**DATES:** 1688-1954

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 5 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, diaries, legal and financial records and memorabilia by and about the descendants of Lieutenant Thomas Leffingwell, one of the founders of Norwich, Connecticut. The major groups of papers are those of Christopher Leffingwell (1734-1810), a merchant in Norwich and William Leffingwell (1765-1834), a stockbroker in New York and later a resident of New Haven. These groups contain papers on legal, financial and business transactions. Family correspondence during the Revolutionary War describes civilian life and medical treatment of the period. National politics are discussed all through the nineteenth century. Also of interest are travel diaries kept by Caroline Augusta Foote in Savannah in 1834 and by Frederica Russell Street during a grand tour of Europe, 1843-1847.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0320>

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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.0320>.

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

A major portion of collection is the gift of Russell Cornell Leffingwell and Mrs. Kenneth MacKenzie between 1940-1961; other items were acquired by purchase and as a gift from Roger S. White, II, in 1963.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown, though much of the material in this collection is likely in the public domain. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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### Preferred Citation

Leffingwell Family Papers (MS 320). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Christopher Leffingwell: manufacturer in Connecticut; built first paper mill in Connecticut in 1776; colonel in the state militia during the Revolution; member of the Connecticut Committee of Correspondence.

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## Scope and Contents

The Leffingwell Family Papers contain correspondence, diaries, legal and financial papers, and memorabilia created by or relating to the descendants of Lieutenant Thomas Leffingwell, one of the founders of Norwich, Connecticut. The earliest item in the collection is a deed given by Thomas Leffingwell, Jr., in 1688 and the latest item is a letter sent to Russell Cornell Leffingwell in 1954. Since many family members are represented in the collection the researcher may find it useful to refer to *The Leffingwell Family Record, 1637-1897* by Albert Leffingwell and Charles Wesley Leffingwell. (Bcl 148)

Most prominent among the family members represented in the collection is Christopher Leffingwell (1734-1810), a merchant in Norwich who built the first paper mill in Connecticut. Christopher Leffingwell was also a colonel in the state militia commanding troops in the Revolutionary War and an advisor to Governor Jonathan Trumbull and Silas Deane. The majority of the papers in the collection relate to Norwich and New London County though there are papers for William Leffingwell's company, Leffingwell and Pierpont, in New York City. There are also several letters to Augustus Russell Street in New Haven from Thomas Dunlap, a Yale classmate, in Philadelphia.

The papers are divided into three series as follows: I. Legal and Financial Papers; II. Correspondence; and III. Diaries, Journals, and Other Memorabilia.

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL PAPERS, dating from 1688 to 1902, includes deeds, leases, bills, receipts, citations, warrants, accounts, writs, stock certificates, summons, promissory notes, daybooks, and other similar types of records created by or relating to the Leffingwell family. Many of the presentments, warrants, and summons bear the signatures of Christopher Leffingwell in his capacity as justice of the peace or of Samuel

Leffingwell as a grand juror. These legal records calling persons before the court for disturbing the peace and for swearing or appointing an overseer for a person "likely to be reduced to want" are an interesting reflection of colonial social customs. The numerous deeds in the series do not all involve the transfer of Leffingwell property. In many instances, rather, a Leffingwell would have signed his name as a witness. Several items such as account books and bills relate to the shipping trade. A "Cargo" book from the firm of Leffingwell and Pierpont contains forms or policies for marine insurance.

The series is arranged chronologically. Most items in the series dated prior to 1800 relate to Norwich, Connecticut. After 1800 many items relate to William Leffingwell's business interests in New York and New Haven.

CORRESPONDENCE is composed of eight letterbooks and several folders of correspondence dating from 1761 to 1954. Three of the letterbooks contain handwritten copies of outgoing letters written by Christopher Leffingwell. These letterbooks are interesting for their information on Leffingwell's business dealings and the uncertainties of the shipping trade. The letterbook beginning in 1776 contains letters to George Washington, Jonathan Trumbull, Samuel Huntington, Silas Deane, Matthew Griswold, and others. Letters concerning the conditions of military forces in Connecticut, deprivations suffered by the civilian population during the war, and the varieties of medical treatment will be found in this large volume. A fourth letterbook, belonging to the firm of Leffingwell and Pierpont, contains handwritten copies of outgoing letters mainly dealing with company business. There are also four volumes of letterbooks containing copies of William Leffingwell's outgoing letters. These deal mainly with business and some family matters.

The correspondence, arranged chronologically in the folders that follow the letterbooks, is not sizeable or full for any time period. Nevertheless, there are some items of interest. During the Revolutionary War period there are letters containing complaints about persons considered to be "inimical to the United States of America." Two letters in 1794 to Leffingwell and Pierpont describe an American's impressions of London. Thomas Dunlap's letters to Augustus Russell Street contain comments on a soldier's life in the War of 1812 and on the life of a young lawyer in Philadelphia after the war. In 1817 Susan Dwight wrote Sally Beers Leffingwell about her visit to Washington, D.C., having seen the president at a ball and heard John Randolph speak. The latest letters in this series are to Russell Cornell Leffingwell from a dealer offering items for the Leffingwell family collection.

DIARIES, JOURNALS AND OTHER MEMORABILIA contains items dating from 1779 to 1894. The first item in this series is Christopher Leffingwell's orderly book for July - August 1779. Captain Leffingwell and the Norwich Light Infantry Company had been ordered to guard duty at Millstone Point near New London. The book contains orders and lists of supplies and the detailing of guards for this assignment. There are four diaries or "minute books" belonging to Christopher Leffingwell. The volumes contain only brief entries dealing with weather observations and notes on personal activities. Two volumes with similar contents were written by William Leffingwell. The series also contains journals kept by two young women, one by Caroline Augusta (Street) Foote recording her life during her winter's residence in Savannah, 1834-1835, and a second kept by Frederica Russell Street from 1843 to 1847 concerning the family's "grand tour" of Europe. Christopher Starr Leffingwell's own handwritten "literary magazines" are included in this series as is the auction catalogue for E. H. Leffingwell's autograph collection. The series also includes engravings, portraits, clippings, and family histories and genealogies.

Note: A few items relating to the Leffingwell family are in Manuscripts and Archives though not kept in the collection: 1. Yale Scrapbook of Russell Leffingwell - Yez 8991 (class of 1899); 2. Pamphlets by Russell Leffingwell - Yz 1 899; and 3. Russell Leffingwell's family photo album - Yca 899 L5.

### **Provenance note**

The Leffingwell Family Papers were created in Manuscripts and Archives from the donations of several persons, including Russell Cornell Leffingwell and Mrs. Kenneth Mackenzie. Additional items were purchased from dealers. The first items were donated in 1940 and materials were added to the collection steadily through 1961. In 1975 several items were transferred from the Beinecke Library to the Leffingwell Family Papers. Most of these items had been given to the Yale University Library by Mr. Roger S. White, II, in 1913.

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## **Arrangement**

Arranged in three series: I. Legal and Financial Papers. II. Correspondence. III. Diaries, Journals, and Other Memorabilia.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: LEGAL AND FINANCIAL PAPERS

b. 1, f. 1	Legal and financial papers	1688, 1700, 1705, 1707, 1718-1727
b. 1, f. 2	Thomas Leffingwell's memo book of financial transactions	1698-1707
b. 1, f. 3-11	Legal and financial papers	1728-1789
b. 1, f. 12	Norwich, Conn City Court "Book of Acct of City Court Fees by Benjamin Huntington	1784-1790
b. 1, f. 13	Legal and financial papers	1790-1799
	1802 Sep-1803 Dec (Daybook, beginning of) See: <a href="#">Vol 4 of Wm Leffingwell's Letterbooks in Series II</a>	
b. 2, f. 14	William Leffingwell's Day Book	1799-1801, 1803 December - 1815
b. 2, f. 15	Legal and financial papers	1800-1808
	1798-1801 Leffingwell & Pierpont's "Bills Payable and Bills Receivable" 1807-1808 Wm Leffingwell's "Bills Payable" See: <a href="#">Vol 3 of Wm Leffingwell's Letterbooks in Series II</a>	
b. 2, f. 16	Leffingwell & Pierpont "Cargo" book	1800
b. 2, f. 17	Christopher Leffingwell's Day Book (CL died 1810)	1807-1814
b. 3, f. 18	Legal and financial papers	1811-1819
b. 3, f. 19	Account Book of William Leffingwell	1817-1836
b. 3, f. 20-22	Legal and financial papers	1820-1854, 1895-1902
	Oversize	
b. 3A	Deed from Solomon Tracy to Daniel Tracy	1700 May 27
b. 3A	Deed from James Birchard to Isaac Huntington	1718 October 9 or November 24
b. 3A	Deed from Samuel Leffingwell to Isaac Huntington	1741 May 1
b. 3A	Indenture John Cross	1741 April 17
b. 3A	Account of Joshua Huntington with Christopher Leffingwell (1773-1775)	1775 January 11
b. 3A	Account Brig <i>Nancy</i> to William Coit	1775 July 19
b. 3A	Invoice of Molasses from Brig <i>Nancy</i> to Cap' [Davis?]	1775 July 22
b. 3A	Bill of Sale for the cargo of the sloop <i>Mercury</i> at Cape Francis to which is added Loring's bill to the sloop	1782 September 3

## Oversize (continued)

b. 3A	Joshua Huntington's Account with Benajah Leffingwell (1773-1785)	1786 February 7
b. 3A	Trustees Deed to Christopher Leffingwell	1800 January 20
b. 3A	New York State Certificate of Appointment to Russell Leffingwell (photostatic copy)	1804 April 10
b. 3A	Deed to pew for Nathaniel Lyon in new Meeting-House of the First Ecclesiastical Society of New Haven	1814 December 15
b. 3A	Deed to pew for William Leffingwell in new Meeting-House of the First Ecclesiastical Society of New Haven	1814 December 16



**Series II: CORRESPONDENCE**

b. 4, f. 1	Christopher Leffingwell's Letterbook	1764 June 7 - 1767 August 24
b. 4, f. 2	Christopher Leffingwell's Letterbook	1776-1801
b. 4, f. 3	Letterbook of Leffingwell & Pierpont	1795-1798
b. 4, f. 4	Christopher Leffingwell's Letterbook	1803-1810
William Leffingwell's Letterbooks four large volumes at end of collection:		
Oversize		
b. 9	Vols I-II	1800-1816
b. 10	Vols III-IV	1816-1834
b. 4, f. 6	Correspondence	1761, 1775-1777, 1788, 1793-1794
b. 5, f. 7-9	Correspondence	1797-1803, 1814-1829, 1832-1834, 1843, 1847, 1852, 1854-1855, 1859, 1861, 1863
b. 5, f. 10	Thomas Dunlap to Augustus Russell Street	1811-1842
b. 5, f. 11	Correspondence	1887-1937, 1954

## Series III: DIARIES, JOURNALS AND OTHER MEMORABILIA

b. 6, f. 1	Christopher Leffingwell's Orderly Book	1779 July-August
b. 6, f. 2-5	Christopher Leffingwell's Diary	1793 January 1-1796 January 20, 1800 September 28-1802 November 16, 1804 August 16-1806 June 6
b. 6, f. 6	Christopher Leffingwell's Commonplace Book	undated
b. 6, f. 7	House Expenses of William Leffingwell	1800-1802
b. 6, f. 7	Diary of William Leffingwell	1809, 1815-1817
b. 6, f. 8	Book of mss verse by Caroline Mary (Leffingwell) Street prior to her marriage	1814
b. 6, f. 9	Diary of William Leffingwell	1829 January 1 - 1831 February 25
b. 6, f. 10	Caroline Augusta Foote's journal of her winter's residence in Savannah	1834-1835
b. 7, f. 11	"Scrapbook" - Christopher Starr Leffingwell English	1843-1844
b. 7, f. 12	"Ellsworth Magazine" - Christopher Starr, Leffingwell English	1843
b. 7, f. 13	"Ellsworth Literary Messenger" - Christopher Starr Leffingwell English	1844
b. 7, f. 14	"Ellsworth Literary Repository" - Christopher Starr Leffingwell English	
b. 7, f. 15	"Richfield Literary Repository" - Christopher Starr Leffingwell English	
b. 7, f. 16	Emily Frederica Russell Street's Diary of a European Tour	1843-1845, [1847?]
b. 7, f. 17	Ms notebook showing lists of furniture, rugs, etc., to various persons or institutions - Caroline Mary (Leffingwell) Street	Circa 1855
b. 7, f. 18	Autograph book	Circa 1856
b. 7, f. 19	Auction catalogue for E. H. Leffingwell's autograph collection	1891
b. 7, f. 20	Diaries of Russell C. Leffingwell	1893-1894
b. 8, f. 21	Family genealogies and histories	
b. 8, f. 22	Portraits and engravings	
b. 8, f. 23	Clippings	
b. 8, f. 24	Unidentified miscellany	

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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

Americans -- Europe  
Armed Forces  
Business  
Businessmen  
Families  
Merchants

Street, Emily Frederica Russell  
Stribling, Cornelius Kincheloe, 1796-1880

### Families

Leffingwell family

### Corporate Body

Leffingwell and Pierpont (New York, N.Y.)

### Geographic Names

Connecticut  
Europe -- Description and travel  
Great Britain  
New Haven (Conn.) -- Commerce  
New London (Conn.)  
New York (N.Y.) -- Commerce  
New York (State)  
Norwich (Conn.)  
Southern States  
United States -- History -- Colonial period, ca.  
1600-1775  
United States -- History -- Revolution,  
1775-1783  
United States -- History -- War of 1812  
United States -- Politics and government -- 19th  
century

### Genres / Formats

Account books  
Diaries

### Names

Dunlap, Thomas, approximately 1792-1864  
Foote, Andrew H. (Andrew Hull), 1806-1863  
Foote, Caroline Augusta Street, -1863  
Lathrop, Joanna Leffingwell  
Leffingwell, Benajah, 1765-1804  
Leffingwell, Catharine Beatty Alsop, 1835-  
Leffingwell, Christopher Starr, 1827-  
Leffingwell, Edward Henry, 1803-1888  
Leffingwell, Lucius W.  
Leffingwell, R. C. (Russell Cornell), 1878-1960  
Leffingwell, Samuel, 1690 or 1-1753  
Street, Augustus Russell, 1791-1866