

Guide to the Parker Family Papers

MS 685



compiled by Susan Grigg

February 1980

Yale University Library
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 685

CREATOR: Parker family

TITLE: Parker Family Papers

DATES: 1747-1930

BULK DATES: 1789-1866

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 linear foot (3 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection consists of correspondence, poems, estate papers, notebooks, account books, logbooks, legal books, and miscellaneous papers of the Lay, Parker, Pratt, Shaler, Smith, Stark, Tyler, and Williams families of eastern Connecticut.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0685>

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.0685>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to 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

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Whitlock's in 1941-1944; in part by gift of Carroll A. Means in 1941.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. 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.

Preferred Citation

Parker Family Papers (MS 685). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Scope and Contents

The Parker Family Papers consist of letters, legal and financial records, and miscellaneous items of the Parker, Lay, and other families with roots in eastern coastal Connecticut in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Parker family represented here is that of Gideon Parker of Essex and his children, principally his sons John L. and Gideon M., who were engaged in trade in Essex and in Key West, Florida, and Mobile, Alabama. The Parker papers are mainly commercial records and family correspondence. The Lay family papers consist of deeds and miscellaneous items belonging to members of several generations of the Lay and allied families of Saybrook, Westbrook, and Guilford, Connecticut. The Stark family is represented by correspondence of two households: Benjamin Stark of New London, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon; and Jonathan Stark and his children of Portersville in Groton. There are also commercial papers of Nathan Tyler, B[enoni?] Southworth, and two men named Timothy Shaler; several manuscript poems, including a striking denunciation of "British Taxation in North America" signed by Lucy D. Geer of Groton; and letters by William S. Williams of Michigan and Mary Avery Smith (later Mrs. Rowland Sears) of Petersburg and Albany, New York, to their relatives in Connecticut and New York.

The Parker Family Papers were purchased from Whitlock's in several lots between 1941 and 1944, except that the photostats of the Benjamin Stark letters were made by courtesy of Carroll A. Means at the time of sale of the original letters at the Collector's Shop in 1941.

Collection Contents

Inventory, 1747–1930, bulk 1789–1866

1.25 linear feet (3 boxes)

Lay family

DeWolf, Lucy Rebecca (Lay) Rawson, of Westbrook, Conn., and Green River, Vt.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | 2 ALS to her son, Edward Lay Rawson | 1866, 1881 |
| b. 1, f. 1 | 2 ALS to her sister, Emmie Elizabeth Lay | 1878, undated |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Dupee, James A., of Boston: ALS to Annie L. Prince | 1845 |
| b. 1, f. 3 | Hayden, Jerusha, of the Wallingford Union Academy: poem, "On the death of Alfred Lay" | 1810 |
| b. 1, f. 4 | Holcomb, Medad (d. 1858) of Guilford: estate papers | 1859-1891 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Kimball, W.A. with the U.S. Army in Centreville, Va.; 2 ALS to his family (copies) | 1862 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Lay, Alfred French (1794-1810): two school notebooks | [pre-1810] |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Lay, Asa (1749-1814) of Saybrook: estate papers | 1798, 1811-1821, 1856 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | Lay, Asa (1749-1814): <i>Captain Asa Lay of the War for Independence</i> , by Mary Hewitt Mitchell | 1930 |
| b. 1, f. 9 | Lay, Edward Bliss (1792-[1864-1865]) of Westbrook: will (copy) | 1864 |
| Lay, Emmie Elizabeth (1828-1903) | | |
| b. 1, f. 10 | ALS to her brother-in-law and sister, John S. Starr and Lydia Austin (Lay) Starr | 1848 |
| b. 1, f. 10 | AL (incomplete) from an unidentified correspondent of Westbrook | 1890 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Lay, Jonathan W. (1825-1893) of Georgia, Vt.: ALS to his brother-in-law and sister, John S. Starr and Lydia Austin (Lay) Starr of Guilford, Conn. | 1848 |
| Lay, Lucy White (1797-1884): | | |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Commonplace book (Saybrook) | undated |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Will (Westbrook; copy) | 1872 |
| b. 1, f. 13 | Lay, Martha (Wright) (Mrs. Steuben) of Norwich Conn.: ALS to her brother, David Wright of Boston | 1810 |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Lay, Richard W., of Guilford: ALS to his uncle | undated |
| b. 1, f. 15 | Lay, Robert, of Saybrook: agreement between his son and executor, Samuel Lay, and his son-in-law and daughter, Jabez and Dorothea (Lay) Denison, all of Saybrook | 1744 |

Lay family (continued)

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| b. 1, f. 16 | Lay, Samuel, of Saybrook: account book, later used as a scrapbook for clippings | 1791-1818 |
| b. 1, f. 17 | Lay, Sarah (Wolcott) (1752-1840) of Saybrook: estate papers | 1837, 1840 |
| b. 1, f. 18 | Lay, Steuben (1787-1869) of Westbrook: estate papers | 1859, 1869 |
| | Leete, Charles Frederic (1820-) | |
| b. 1, f. 19 | Insurance policies | 1889, 1895 |
| b. 1, f. 19 | List of Leete and Hubbard deaths | 1812-1898 |
| b. 1, f. 19 | Invitation to a reception given by Orville H. Platt | 1903 |
| b. 1, f. 19 | "List of Charles F. Leets house" English | undated |
| b. 1, f. 20 | Rawson, Edward Lay (1858-): 4 ALS to members of his family | 1870-1891 |
| b. 1, f. 21 | Rawson, Grindal (1803-1869): ALS to his son (Edward D. Rawson?) and daughter | 185(4?) |
| b. 1, f. 22 | Stone, Joseph F., of New York: ALS to his uncle, Abram S. Fowler of Guilford, Conn. | 1850 |
| b. 1, f. 23 | Wright, Charles Townsend, visiting at Marion Courthouse, S.C.: power of attorney to Mary H. Wright of Norwich, Conn. | 1831 |
| b. 1, f. 24 | Guilford deeds | 1845-1873, undated |
| b. 1, f. 25 | Saybrook deeds | 1783-1837 |
| b. 1, f. 26 | Westbrook deeds | 1831-1876 |
| | Parker family | |
| | Parker, Gideon Marsena | ([1812?]-1874) |
| b. 2, f. 27 | Account books | 1831-1837 |
| b. 2, f. 28 | Letter press book | 1836-1837 |
| | Parker, John L. | |
| b. 2, f. 29 | Log book for the ships <i>Edwina</i> and <i>Severn</i> | 1840 |
| b. 2, f. 30 | Memorandum books | 1839, 1853-1857 |
| b. 2, f. 31 | Account book | 1842-1847 |
| b. 2, f. 31 | Parker, Rebecca E. (Shaler or Lay?) (Mrs. John): account book with entries covered by a newspaper account of the American Congress of Churches | 1885 |
| b. 2, f. 31 | Correspondence and miscellaneous papers | 1840-1866 |
| | Pratt family | |
| b. 3, f. 32 | Latimer, Arvilla (Pratt): recipe book | 1850 |

Pratt family (continued)

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| b. 3, f. 32 | Pratt, Sarah E., of Essex, Conn.: composition book | 1863, undated |
| | Shaler, Timothy, of (East) Haddam, Conn. | |
| b. 3, f. 33 | Safe-conduct pass for the schooner <i>George</i> | 1806 |
| b. 3, f. 33 | Letter | 1844 |
| b. 3, f. 33 | Account book | 1852 |
| b. 3, f. 33 | Legal papers | undated |
| | Smith family | |
| b. 3, f. 34 | Sears, Mary Avery (Smith) (Mrs. Rowland Sears, 1794-1878) of Petersburg and Albany, N.Y.: letters to her sister, Clarinda (Smith) Frink (Mrs. Adam Frink, 1786-1858) of Russia, N.Y. | 1816-1827 |
| | Southworth, B[enoni, Jr.?], of (East) Haddam, Conn. | |
| b. 3, f. 35 | Accounts with members of the Shaler family for the sloop and schooner <i>America</i> | 1840-1843 |
| b. 3 | Letter | 1852 |
| b. 3, f. 36 | Stark, Benjamin (1820-1898) of San Francisco and Portland, Ore.: incoming business letters; letters to his mother, Mrs. Benjamin Stark, and brother, William W. Stark of New London, Conn. (photostats) | 1849-1852 |
| | Stark family of Portersville, Groton, Conn. | |
| b. 3, f. 37 | Letters to Jonathan Stark from his brother-in-law, William A. Reed, and nephew, Isaac C. Reed of Goshen, Conn., and Ill., and his brother Lathrop of Bozrah, Conn.; letters to and from Jonathan Stark's sons, Russell, sailing out of Savannah, and William, sailing in the brig <i>Emeline</i> | 1825, 1838-1848, 1857 |
| b. 3, f. 38 | Tyler, Frances R., of Boston and Essex, Conn.: diary and account book | 1909 |
| b. 3, f. 38 | Tyler, William S.: account book | 1845-1848 |
| | Tyler, Nathan | |
| b. 3, f. 39 | Bound volume containing a log of the sloop <i>Lark</i> , miscellaneous maritime notations, and a poem, "The Old Maid's Petition" | 1789-1900 |
| b. 3, f. 39 | Papers re: British compensation for the confiscation of the sloop <i>Lark</i> | 1798-1803 |
| b. 3, f. 40 | Williams, William S. (d. 1834) and Emily W. (Mrs. W.S.) of Detroit and Pontiac, Michigan: letters to his brother, Joseph S. Williams, and his mother, Thankful Williams, of Mystic Bridge, Conn. | 183[1?]-1835 |
| | Poems | |
| b. 3, f. 41 | Geer, Lucy D., of Groton, Conn.: "British Taxation in North America" (manuscript) | [ca. 1765?] |
| b. 3, f. 42 | "James Bird," re: the Kingston Volunteers in the Lake Erie campaign (manuscript) English | undated |

Poems (continued)

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| b. 3, f. 42 | "Sword Presentation, at Middletown, Oct. 7th, 1862" (printed) English | undated |
| b. 3, f. 42 | "Poetry Poetry: Fire in New York; Fishermans Girl; Crazy Jane" (manuscript) English | undated |
| b. 3, f. 43 | "Cold Water Army Pledge" (printed) English | undated |
| b. 3, f. 44 | New Haven (city): <i>At a City Meeting Holden in New-Haven, April 22, 1806. A Bye-Law for establishing and regulating a Market...</i> | 1806 |
| b. 3, f. 45 | Miscellaneous papers | 1744-1906 |

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

Business
Families
Merchants
Shipping

Corporate Bodies

America (Ship)
Edwina (Ship)
Lark (Ship)
Severn (Ship)

Geographic Names

Connecticut
Connecticut -- Social life and customs
Essex (Conn.)
Groton (Conn.)
Saybrook (Conn.)
Southern States
United States -- History -- Colonial period, ca.
1600-1775
West (U.S.)
Westbrook (Conn.)

Genres / Formats

Account books
Logbooks
Poems

Names

Geer, Lucy D.
Lay, Asa, 1840-1914
Parker, Gideon Marsena, ca. 1812-1874
Parker, John L.
Sears, Mary Avery Smith
Shaler, Timothy
Southworth, Benoni
Stark, Benjamin, 1820-1898
Stark, Russell
Stark, William
Tyler, Frances B.
Tyler, Nathan
Tyler, William S.
Williams, William S., d. 1834

Families

Leet family
Parker family