

Historical Papers of Dr. Charles H. Reed

Finding Aid

Last Revised: January 3, 2019

Collection Summary

Collection number: LH013
Collection title: Historical Papers of Dr. Charles H. Reed (a.k.a. The Reed Collection)
Dates: 1690-1973
Size: 5 linear feet (8 boxes + one oversize box + map case + Roll Box)
Creator/Collector: Dr. Charles H. Reed (1862-1946)
Acquisitions info: The collection was donated to the Library in 1985 by Rachel Deering, the daughter of Dr. Reed
Language(s): English
Repository: The Westborough Public Library
Processed by: Vanessa D. Hale (with Dr. Anthony T. Vaver), 2018

Rights and Access

Access: Collection is open for research

Copyright: No known copyright restrictions. No known restrictions on use.

Publishing Permission: As a courtesy, please consult with the Westborough Public Library Local History Librarian.

Personal History

Dr. Charles H. Reed was a Westborough veterinarian and devotee of local history. The collection of his papers consists of correspondence, deeds, diaries, letters, maps, wills and other government documents pertaining to the early history of the Town of Westborough. He began gathering information on the Town's history, land and people as a hobby, starting with the Town's first 27 founding families. The collection grew to contain several hundred original documents, and a portion of journals and lists that were transcribed by Dr. Reed. All items contained in this collection describe the early culture, history and life of folks living and doing business in Westborough. It is clear genealogy was important to Dr. Reed as threads of this topic are represented throughout the collection.

After Dr. Reed died, his daughter Rachel Deering carried on the work. In 1985, she donated the collection to the Westborough Public Library for preservation and safe-keeping.

Scope and Content Note

Dr. Reed's eclectic collection spans nearly 250 years and illustrates the lives of residents in Westborough and the region, as many letters and deeds contain facts about the surrounding communities of Marlborough, Northborough, Southborough and Shrewsbury.

Information recorded in the files range from historic land deeds to correspondence regarding the creation of neighborhoods and business districts. There is a great deal of "Order of Payments" which are akin to invoices and tell the story of who was responsible for what activity [i.e. Wheat Bounty Claims or the vendors used for the construction of the Town Hall].

Some of the most interesting items in the collection include:

- A 1690 "Order of Payment" in the Beeman family file; perhaps the earliest document in the library archives
- A map [perhaps drafted in 1709] laying out the parcel for the Church, notable because the Town was not incorporated until 1717
- A 1757 love letter written by Joseph Woods to his family in the Woods family file. Further research, and Woods genealogy charts, indicate Joseph was killed in action shortly after writing this letter during the Battle of Lake George in the French and Indian War
- A 1787 appointment of Nathan Fisher, Esq, as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Second Regiment, signed by Governor John Hancock
- In the Reed journals, there is a detailed description of town meetings, a list of the Irish in Westborough, information on the Paul Revere bell at the Baptist Church, extensive notes on various homes and a description of George Washington's itinerary in 1775

There are some gaps in the records. For example, there are only three Annual Town Reports included for the mid-1800's. (Although many others are on file in the Westborough Town Clerk's office). Genealogy was most definitely a passion for Dr. Reed, but do note that Series 4: Genealogy may seem small. A great deal of genealogy data is contained within individual the family files in Series 3: Westborough Family Papers. In order not to disrupt the provenance of Dr. Reed's order, information like this was not moved into Series 4.

The financial records of the Town included provide basic census and assessing data, but also reveal the relative socio-economic standing of residents. The valuation records and land deeds illustrate how and when the community evolved and prospered. Additionally, correspondence in many of the family files will indicate the strong connection there was between the residents and their parish.

During this part of the settlement of American communities, a town could not be incorporated unless a Minister had been appointed. Thus, nearly the entire cultural and social life of a community was directly related to the church.

Although the Westborough Public Library is very grateful to Dr. Reed for his perseverance and care of all of these documents, much credit also goes to his daughter, Ms. Deering, who ascertained ensured that all of these papers were left in the care and custody of the Westborough Public Library.

Series Summary

- Series 1 **Government Records:** Annual Town Reports, correspondence (primarily to the Board of Selectmen), tax records, Town Meeting notes and materials, and early history and payroll records of the Fire Department.
- Series 2 **Schools:** Publications, regulations and reports of the public school system, as well as some items pertaining to the Lyman School for Boys.
- Series 3 **Westborough Family Papers:** Genealogy records, land deeds, correspondence, wills and other missives of thirty-two early families.
- Series 4 **Genealogy:** Family charts, including records of Pilgrim and Puritan settlers.
- Series 5 **Churches:** Assorted Booklets, manuals, programs and sermons.
- Series 6 **Military:** Light Infantry rolls, military appointments, volume of Thank You letters to ladies in the Soldiers Sewing Society.
- Series 7 **Miscellaneous:** Pamphlets containing historical anecdotes and advertisements from early local businesses and Town celebrations.
- Series 8 **Reed:** Six journals with Dr. Reed's transcriptions, including history of architecture, genealogy, lists of graves, and assorted research notes. Additionally, other items include transcriptions of first settlers, tax lists and information on Westborough veterans. This series also includes a bound volume of additional transcription notes, as well as a scrapbook from the Westborough Housing Authority.

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Government Records

Box 1

Folder

- 1.01 Town of Westborough By-Laws, 1874, 1892
- 1.02 Town Reports, 1866, 1875, 1876
- 1.03 Town Correspondence, 1774-1876, N.D.
- 1.04 Land Deeds, 1766-1845
- 1.05 School Taxes, 1857
- 1.06 Taxes/Bounty Claims, 1775-1860, N.D.
- 1.07 Bounty Tax (to support military), 1862
- 1.08 Town House Construction, Including Financials, 1839-1929, N.D.
- 1.09 Cemetery Committee Report, 1848-1869
- 1.10 Fire Department Correspondence, 1839-1894, N.D.

- 1.11 Fire Department Payroll Records, 1844-1875
- 1.12 Fire Department Payroll Records, 1877-1884, N.D.
- 1.13 Letter Conveying Site for Library, 1898
- 1.14 Programs for Westborough Celebrations, 1930, 1931

Oversize Box

Folder

- OS.01 Town Meeting Rules, 1850
- OS.02 Statement of Wheat, 1838
- OS.03 Plan of Lots [Streets], 1918
- OS.04 Report of Committee of Reservoir and Fire Apparatus, N.D., List of Subscribers to Fire Engine and Apparatus, 1838
- OS.05 Log of Fires in Westborough, 1885-1907
- OS.06 Consecration of Westborough Cemetery, 1846
- OS.07 Tax Assessments, 1727, 1860
- OS.08 An Act to Ascertain the Rateable Estate, 1831

Map Case

Drawer: Folder

- 3.01 Thanksgiving Day Proclamations, 1766, 1834 and 1841

Series 2: Schools

Box 1

Folder

- 1.15 Dedication of Westborough High School, 1926
- 1.16 *High School Student* (Student Magazine), 1885-1888
- 1.17 High School Graduation Program, 1878
- 1.18 Reports of the School Committee, 1841-1852
- 1.19 Reports of the School Committee, 1852-1869
- 1.20 Reports of the School Committee, 1870-1878
- 1.21 Reports of the School Committee, 1884-1887
- 1.22 High School Graduation Exercises, 1873, 1878, 1880-1889
- 1.23 High School Graduation Exercises, 1891-1898
- 1.24 High School Graduation Exercises, 1903-1913, 1931-1932

Box 2

Folder

- 2.01 School District Number Two, Rules, 1846
- 2.02 School Committee Rules & Regulations, 1916
- 2.03 School Correspondence & Financials, 1816-1856
- 2.04 Willow Park Seminary Catalogue, 1873-1874
- 2.05 Seminary for Young Ladies Catalogue, 1840-1841
- 2.06 Lyman School Dedication, 1860

Oversize

Folder

- OS.09 Westborough High Graduation Program, 1877

- OS.10 Taft High School Diploma, 1910
 OS.11 *Lyman School Enterprise*, Vol XII, No. 2, 1899

Series 3: Westborough Family Papers

Box 2

Folder

- 2.07 Adams, 1765-1881
- 2.08 Abbott, 1830-1831
- 2.09 Belknap, 1777-1836
- 2.10 Beeman, 1690-1822
- 2.11 Bellows, 1827
- 2.12 Bent, 1830
- 2.13 Bernard (National Straw Works?), 1931-1935
- 2.14 Bowman, 1708-1829
- 2.15 Bullard, N.D.
- 2.16 Chamberlain, 1807-1843
- 2.17 Cobb, 1882
- 2.18 Fay, 1787-1844
- 2.19 Fessenden, 1771-1810
- 2.20 Fisher, 1784-1858
- 2.21 Gleason, 1868
- 2.22 Goodell, 1827
- 2.23 Harrington, 1824-1857
- 2.24 Hawes, 1761-1847
- 2.25 Maynard, 1789-1862
- 2.26 Morse, 1788
- 2.27 Parker, 1798
- 2.28 Parkman (Genealogies), N.D.
- 2.29 Parkman (Letters), 1741-1835
- 2.30 Parkman (Miscellaneous), 1730-1788
- 2.31 Peters, 1795-1854
- 2.32 Pierce, 1852
- 2.33 Reed, 1934
- 2.34 Rice, 1744-1910 (Descendants of Edmund Rice)
- 2.35 Robinson, 1787-1807
- 2.36 Ruggles, 1816-1817
- 2.37 Sibley (Genealogy), N.D.
- 2.38 Tufts, 1855
- 2.39 Warren, 1824-1882
- 2.40 Wesson, 1833
- 2.41 Whitney, 1793
- 2.42 Woods, 1720-1850

Oversize

Folder

- OS.12 Adams

- OS.13 Cobb
- OS.14 Fay
- OS.15 Morse
- OS.16 Rice
- OS.17 Tufts
- OS.18 Warren
- OS.19 Woods

Map Case

Drawer: Folder

- 3.02 Eager/Davis, 1908

Roll Box, LH.013

- Eager/Davis, 1859

Series 4: Genealogy

Box 2

Folder

- 2.43 Genealogy Chart of Pilgrims & Puritans
- 2.44 Genealogy – *Cradle Book* (Birthday Calendar), 1905-1915

Oversize

Folder

- OS.20 Genealogy Chart of Pilgrims & Puritans, N.D
- OS.21 List of Passengers Bound for New England, 1656
- OS.22 Ancestry of Alice Fay, N.D.
- OS.23 Ancestors of Louise Forbes Perrington Warren, N.D.

Map Case

Drawer: Folder

- 3.03 Descendants of Edmund Rice Chart, N.D.

Series 5: Churches

Box 3

Folder

- 3.01 Congregational Church Pageant Program (200th Anniversary), 1924
- 3.02 50th Anniversary Booklet, Ladies Sewing Circle, 1886
- 3.03 Evangelical (Congregational) Church Manuals, 1842, 1875, 1890
- 3.04 Sermons Delivered by Amariah Frost, 1765 (December 8)
- 3.05 Copy of Constitution of Sister Society of Westborough, N.D.
- 3.06 Orders of Payment for a Meeting House and a Land Map for Meeting House, 1709(?), 1748, 1753
- 3.07 First Baptist Church Manual, 1875
- 3.08 New England Primer (Volume on Catechism), 1842
- 3.09 *Worcester South Chronicle*, 1670-1876
- 3.10 Descriptive Letter of New Meeting House, 1835

- 3.12 Letter from Evangelical Society Re: Reverend Cady, N.D.
- 3.13 Reflections on First Sabbath School, 1817

Oversize

Folder

- OS.24 Covenant of the Congregational Church of Christ, N.D.
- OS.25 Evangelical Church of Westborough Pew Assignments, 1870

Series 6: Military

Box 3

Folder

- 3.14 Westborough Light Infantry Bylaws, 1864
- 3.15 Appointment of William Child as Corporal, 1864

Thank you letters for supplies in the American Civil War to members of the Soldiers Sewing Society:

- 3.16 Letter to Mrs. Mary Aldrich, December 26, 1861
- 3.17 Letter to Mrs. Greene, May 14, 1864
- 3.18 Letter to Mrs. Greene, June 7, 1864
- 3.19 Letter to Mrs. Greene, July 24, 1864
- 3.20 Letter to Mrs. Greene, August 13, 1864
- 3.21 Letter to Mrs. Greene, September 18, 1864
- 3.22 Letter to Mrs. Greene, October 25, 1864
- 3.23 Letter to Mrs. Greene, April 11, 1865
- 3.24 Letter to Mrs. Greene, August 1, 1865
- 3.25 Letter to Miss Marshall, January 21, 1862
- 3.26 Letter to Miss Marshall, April 15, 1862
- 3.27 Letter to Miss Marshall, July 19, 1862
- 3.28 Letter to Miss Marshall, August 1, 1862
- 3.29 Letter to Miss Marshall, August 16, 1862
- 3.30 Letter to Miss Marshall, August 23, 1862
- 3.31 Letter to Miss Marshall, February 2, 1863
- 3.32 Letter to Miss Marshall, March 18, 1863
- 3.33 Letter to Miss Marshall, March 23, 1863
- 3.34 Letter to Miss Marshall, May 5, 1863
- 3.35 Letter to Miss Marshall, June 13, 1863
- 3.36 Letter to Miss Marshall, June 16, 1863
- 3.37 Letter to Mrs. Phillips, December 12, 1861
- 3.38 Envelopes to Greene and Marshall, 1862, 1864

Oversize

Folder

- OS.26 Westborough Light Infantry Rolls, 18141-1822
- OS.27 Appointment of Nathan Fisher, Esq, as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Second Regiment, signed by Governor John Hancock, 1787

Series 7: Miscellaneous

Box 3

Folder

- 3.39 Brigham Family Souvenir Book, 1896
- 3.40 Blue Book, with Parkman Journal References, 1891
- 3.41 Lake Chauncey Park Souvenir Book, N.D.
- 3.42 Westborough Souvenir Booklets, 1878, 1916, N.D.
- 3.43 Westborough Railway Company Stock Certificates, 1901

Box 5

Folder

- 5.02 Housing Authority Scrapbook, 1973

Oversize

Folder

- OS.28 Auction Notices, 1854, 1871
- OS.29 Corporation Certificates, 1888, 1891

Series 8: Reed Research Notes and Transcriptions

Box 3

Folder

- 3.44 Westborough High Alumni, 1872-1898
- 3.45 Census Lists, 1776, 1777
- 3.46 Tax List, 1756
- 3.47 First Settlers, 1717
- 3.48 War of 1812 Solider List
- 3.49 List of Colonial War Soldiers, 1702-1763
- 3.50 Boys and Girls Association, 10th Reunion, 1898

Box 4

Folder

- 4.01 Reed Transcription of Graves, 1718-1922
- 4.02 Reed Transcription of Graves in Midland Cemetery, 1812
- 4.03 Graves in Memorial Cemetery, 1922
- 4.04 First Settlers and Families, N.D.
- 4.05 Reed Research Notes, Genealogy of Various Families, N.D.
- 4.06 Historical (General), N.D.

Box 5

Folder

- 5.01 Reed transcription notes

Box 6

Notecards

- Deeds, Boundaries, and Genealogies, A - F

Box 7

Notecards

Deeds, Boundaries, and Genealogies, F cont. - O

Box 8

Notecards

Deeds, Boundaries, and Genealogies, P - Y

Oversize

Folder

OS.30 List of Soldier's Graves, 1775-1924