



Guide to the Atherton Family Papers, 1772-1852

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Atherton Family Papers, 1772-1852

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

1940.001, 1964.025, 1972.039, 2014.060, 2014.061, 2014.062, 2014.088, 2014.089, 2015.017

Author of Finding Aid:

Author of original finding aid is unidentified.

Sarah Galligan

Creator:

Atherton family

Atherton, Charles G., 1804-1853

Atherton, Charles H. (Charles Humphrey), 1773-1853

Atherton, Joshua, 1737-1809

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 box

Abstract:

Papers, 1772-1852, of the Atherton Family, most notably Joshua Atherton (1737-1809), Charles Humphrey Atherton (1773-1853), and Charles Gordon Atherton (1804-1853).

The majority of the collection includes correspondence, but there are also some legal and estate papers.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Atherton Family Papers, 1940.001, were a gift of Dora N. Spalding in 1940. Accession 1964.025 was a gift of Phillips Exeter Academy in 1964. The Charles G. Atherton receipts (2014.060, 2014.061, 2014.062, and 2014.089) were purchased in 2014. The Charles H. Atherton letter (2014.088) was purchased in 2014.

Processing Information:

The collection was originally processed and the finding aid was written by an unknown person. The finding aid was updated by Sarah Galligan in October 2014. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

No special technical requirements exist for this collection.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Researchers are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Atherton Family Papers, 1940.001. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date Accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information/ Administrative Information:

Joshua Atherton was born in Harvard, MA, on June 20, 1737 to Peter and Experience (Wright) Atherton. He graduated from Harvard College in 1765 and then practiced law in Litchfield, NH, Merrimack, NH, and Amherst, NH. Joshua Atherton was chosen as a New Hampshire State Senator in 1792, but resigned that position when he was appointed Attorney-General in 1793. He died in Amherst, NH, on April 3, 1809.

Charles Humphrey Atherton was the son of Joshua and Abigail (Goss) Atherton on August 14, 1773 in Amherst, NH. He attended Harvard College and went on to practice law in Amherst. Charles H. Atherton served several terms throughout his life in the New Hampshire legislature. He was active in Amherst and New Hampshire affairs. Charles H. Atherton was a vice-president of the New Hampshire Historical Society in 1832 and 1833 and President of the Society from 1834 to 1837. He died on January 8, 1853 in Amherst.

Charles Gordon Atherton was born on July 4, 1804 in Amherst, NH, to Charles H. and Mary Ann (Toppan) Atherton. Like his father and grandfather, he attended Harvard College. He returned to New Hampshire and practiced law in Dunstable (Nashua), NH. From 1831 to 1832, he served as clerk of the New Hampshire State Senate. Atherton then was a State Representative from 1833 to 1836, serving as Speaker of the New Hampshire House. He was then elected to Congress and was in the House of Representatives from 1837 to 1843 and in Congress from 1843 to 1849 and 1853 to 1859.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The Atherton Family Papers includes the correspondence and other items belonging to the Atherton Family of primarily of Amherst, NH. The collection is divided into two series based on type of material and when it was accessioned. Series one is composed of the items of Joshua Atherton (1737-1809), William Gordon (1796-1802), Benjamin West (1746-1817), Charles Humphrey Atherton (1773-1853), and Charles Gordon Atherton (1804-1853). It includes correspondence, commissions, appointments, and an essay written by Charles H. Atherton. The correspondence mostly covers political topics. The second series is composed of receipts that belonged to Charles H. Atherton. The receipts are from locations throughout southern New Hampshire.

Arrangement:

The collection is divided into two series:

Series I. Atherton Family Papers, 1772-1852

Series II. Charles H. Atherton Financial Papers and Receipts, 1799-1818

Contents List

Series I. Atherton Family Papers, 1772-1852

Extent: 8 folders

Scope and Content: Series one contains materials of Joshua Atherton (1737-1809), William Gordon (1796-1802), Benjamin West (1746-1817), Charles Humphrey Atherton (1773-1853), and Charles Gordon Atherton (1804-1853). William Gordon and Benjamin West were married to daughters of Joshua Atherton. Materials include correspondence, commissions, appointments, and an essay written by Charles H. Atherton. About half of the items pertain to Charles Gordon Atherton. Some of his papers include reactions to his gag law resolutions of 1938.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Joshua Atherton (1737-1809) correspondence, 1772-1798
Includes letters with Isaac Rindge, Samuel Blodget, Abigail Goss Atherton, and daughter, Rebecca
- Folder 2 William Gordon (1763-1802) correspondence and certificate, 1794-1800
Includes certificate of marriage to Frances Atherton, 1789; Letters with William Plumer, J. Williams, Joshua Atherton, and Frances Atherton Gordon
- Folder 3 Benjamin West correspondence and records, 1814, not dated

- Includes Reverend Thomas West's records of births of his children and deaths of his three wives; letters and copies of letters; newspaper obituaries
- Folder 4 Charles Humphrey Atherton correspondence, 1794-1831
Includes letters with Joshua Atherton, Caleb Emerson, William M. Richardson, James B. Thornton, Abigail Goss Atherton, Mary Ann Atherton, and Sarah Toppan
- Folder 5 Charles Humphrey Atherton "Memoir of the Life of the Honorable Samuel Dana," printed in New Hampshire Historical Society Collections, vol. III, pg. 2-23
- Folders 6-8 Charles Gordon Atherton correspondence, 1831-1852
Includes mostly political correspondence, letters from Charles Humphrey Atherton opposing the annexation of Texas, letters on the gag law resolutions of 1838

Series II. Charles Humphrey Atherton Financial Papers and Receipts, 1799-1818

Extent: 5 folders

Scope and Content: Series two contains financial papers and receipts that were issued to or by Charles Humphrey Atherton for locations across southern New Hampshire. The receipts are organized into folders based on their accession numbers into the collection (the receipts that arrived together remain together in the appropriate folder).

Box 1 (continued)

- Folders 9-10 Charles H. Atherton financial papers and receipts, 1799-1818 (2014.060)
- Folder 11 Charles H. Atherton receipts, 1805-1812 (2014.061)
- Folder 12 Charles H. Atherton receipts, 1807-1808 (2014.062)
- Folder 13 Charles H. Atherton receipts, 1841-1842 (2014.089)
- Folders 14-16 Charles H. Atherton financial papers and receipts, 1798-1812 (2014.108)
- Folders 17-21 Charles H. Atherton financial papers, 1835-1843 (2015.017)

Separated Materials:

The commissions of Charles Gordon Atherton appointing him ensign in 1825, lieutenant in 1827 and captain in 1828 have been removed to oversize materials. They are located with the broadsides under military commissions and their years.

Subject Terms

People:

Atherton, Abigail Goss
Atherton, Charles G., 1804-1853
Atherton, Charles H. (Charles Humphrey), 1773-1853
Atherton, Joshua, 1737-1809
Atherton, Mary Ann
Bailey, S.T.
Blodget, Samuel, 1757-1814
Dana, Samuel, 1739-1798

Eastman, Ira Allen, 1809-1881
Emerson, Caleb, 1779-1853
Fogg, George Gilman, 1813-1881
Fox, Charles J. (Charles James), 1811-1846
Henshaw, David, 1744-1808
Hunt, John M.
Gordon, William, 1763-1802
Pickering, James
Plumer, William, 1759-1850
Prescott, William Merchant, 1774-1838
Rindge, Isaac
Smith, Jeremiah, 1759-1842
Stark, Caleb, 1759-1838
Steele, John Hardy, 1789-1865
Thornton, James B. (James Buonaparte), 1800-1838
Vose, Frederick
West, Benjamin, 1746-1817
Williams, T.

Organizations:

Democratic Party (U.S.)
Federal Party (U.S.)
Hartford Convention (1814-1814 : Hartford, Conn.)
New Hampshire. General Court
New Hampshire. General Court. Senate
New Hampshire Historical Society
United States. Congress.

Subjects:

Antislavery movements--New England--History--19th century
Texas--Annexation to the United States

Locations:

Amherst, NH
Boston, MA
Concord, NH
Georgia
Milford, NH
Nashua, NH
Ohio
Texas
Washington, DC

Occupations:

Lawyers
Politicians
Senators