

# Guide to the Parker Family Papers

MS 685



compiled by Susan Grigg

February 1980

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  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**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>

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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.0685>.

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

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

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## 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Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain.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.

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## Preferred Citation

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

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## 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 Dorotha (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



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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

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