

Guide to the Chauncey Family-Fowler Family Papers

GEN MSS 814



by Beinecke staff

2007-05-15

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 814

CREATOR: Chauncey family

TITLE: Chauncey family-Fowler family papers

DATES: 1669–1880

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 13.5 linear feet (18 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence, account books, Yale College diplomas, and miscellaneous documents related to Nathaniel Chauncey, and his son Elnathan Chauncey and great-grandson William Chauncey Fowler. The collection contains more than 5,000 letters exchanged by members of the Chauncey, Ellsworth, Fowler, Goodrich, Hand, March, Wadsworth, and Webster families, in particular Rebecca and Noah Webster, as well as various prominent friends in New England. Also present are more than 100 sermons, and folders of material related to the Susquehannah Company, a group of Connecticut investors in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania.

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

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.chauncey>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from C. A. Stonehill on the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2004. The papers were in the estate of Howard B. Field Jr.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Chauncey Family-Fowler Family Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Chauncey Family-Fowler Family Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

This collection received a basic level of processing. The descriptive information found in the Collection Contents section, including span dates for the collection, is drawn in large part from information supplied when the collection was acquired in 2004.

Half of the loose letters in Series I were received in three-ring binders and half were stacked in boxes; the latter group was placed in folders during baseline processing.

Some of the material in this collection may appear in a set of eleven microfilms made in 1932 (FILM MISC 412, Fowler collection, 1662-1874, at Sterling Memorial Library) of material then in the possession of William Chauncey Fowler; for instance, reel number 11 has the volume of Noah Webster letters present in Box 5. However, the films are of poor quality, contain no table of contents, and possess no other guide document.

The former call number was Uncat MSS 653, and the former title of the collection was Nathaniel Chauncey and William Chauncey Fowler Papers.

Chauncey and Fowler Families of Connecticut

Nathaniel Chauncey (1681-1756), clergyman of New Haven, Connecticut, was the first graduate of Yale College (1702). His son, Elnathan Chauncey (1724-1796), clergyman of Durham, Connecticut, was also a graduate of Yale College (1743). Elnathan Chauncey's daughter Catherine (1765-1841) married Reuben Rose Fowler (1763-1844) of Durham in 1790. Their son William Chauncey Fowler (1793-1881), clergyman, educator, and author, of Amherst, Massachusetts, and Durham, was a graduate of Yale College (1816); in 1825 he married Harriet Webster Cobb (1797-1844), the widow of Edward Cobb and daughter of noted lexicographer Noah Webster.

The genealogy, lives, and careers of Chauncey and Fowler family members are well described in the volume *Memorials of the Chaunceys*, by William Chauncey Fowler (Boston: Henry W. Dutton, 1858), in particular pages 93-112, 175-192, and the Chauncey family tree that folds out between pages 88 and 89.

Scope and Contents

The papers primarily consist of correspondence but also include account books, Yale College diplomas, and miscellaneous documents related to Nathaniel Chauncey, Elnathan Chauncey, William Chauncey Fowler, and their extended families and friends. Among the correspondents are members of the Ellsworth, Fowler, Goodrich, Hand, March, Wadsworth, and Webster families, in particular Rebecca and Noah Webster. Also

present are more than 100 sermons, and folders of material related to the Susquehannah Company, a group of Connecticut investors in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Correspondence. II. Financial and Other Records. III. Writings.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence

10.83 linear feet (11 boxes)

The correspondence in Series I includes letters that were bound into volumes in the nineteenth century, letters held in plastic sleeves and contained in three-ring binders, and letters held in plastic sleeves contained in file folders. The volumes and binders received numbers and letter designations at some point, applied either by a descendant or by the vendor.

The material is arranged in no discernable order with the exception of one bound volume of letters written to Harriet and William Chauncey Fowler by Noah Webster, Harriet Fowler's father. Among other correspondents identified by the vendor as being represented by more than forty letters each are Emily Webster Ellsworth, Charles Augustus Fowler, Charles Chauncey Fowler, Eliza Anne Fowler, Emily Ellsworth Fowler, William Worthington Fowler, Chauncey Allen Goodrich, Elihu Chauncey Goodrich, Elizur Goodrich, Julia Webster Goodrich, Joseph Winborn Hand, Francis Andrew March, James Wadsworth, and Rebecca Webster.

Letter books

b. 1	Letter books, volumes numbered 1-11
b. 2	Letter books, volumes numbered 12-18
b. 3	Letter books, volumes labeled AA-FF
b. 4	Letter books, volumes labeled GG-KK
b. 5	Letter book, volume labeled LL
b. 5	Letter book, Noah Webster's letters to Harriet and William Fowler

Binders and folders of letters

b. 6	Letter binders numbered 19-22
b. 7	Letter binders numbered 23-26
b. 8	Letter binders numbered 27-28
b. 8	"Yale books" [binders] numbered 1 and 2
b. 9	Loose letters 15 Folders
b. 10	Loose letters 15 Folders
b. 11	Loose letters 8 Folders

Series II: Financial and Other Records

1 linear foot (4 boxes)

Series II contains account books kept by family members and diplomas issued by Yale College. Also here is material related to the Susquehannah Company, a group of Connecticut investors attempting to acquire and develop land in Pennsylvania’s Wyoming Valley.

b. 12	Account books <i>7 Folders</i>
b. 13	Account books <i>3 Folders</i>
b. 14	Diplomas
b. 15	Susquehannah Company correspondence, documents, and maps <i>3 Folders</i>

Series III: Writings

1.63 linear feet (3 boxes)

Series III contains writings by Nathaniel Chauncey, William Chauncey Fowler, and others.

b. 16	On political economy	
b. 16	"Passages in the Life of William Chauncey Fowler"	1874
b. 17	Amherst Eulogy of Noah Webster	1843
b. 17	Sermons 6 Folders	
b. 18	Sermons (eighteenth century), grouped and tied in bundles	

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

Congregational churches -- Clergy
Congregational churches -- Connecticut -- 18th century
Congregationalists -- Connecticut -- 18th century

Geographic Names

Connecticut -- Church history
Connecticut -- Religion
Connecticut -- Social life and customs

Genres / Formats

Account books
Diplomas -- United States -- 18th century
Letter books
Sermons -- United States -- 18th century

Occupations

Clergy -- United States -- 18th century

Families

Chauncey family
Fowler family
Goodrich family
Webster family

Names

Chauncey, Nathaniel, 1681-1756
Chauncy, Elnathan, 1724-1796
Fowler, William Chauncey, 1793-1881
Fowler, William Worthington, 1833-1881
Goodrich, Chauncey A. (Chauncey Allen), 1790-1860
Goodrich, Elizur, 1761-1849
Hand, Joseph Winborn, 1792-1844
Webster, Noah, 1758-1843
Webster, Rebecca Greenleaf, 1766-1847

Corporate Bodies

Susquehannah Company
Yale University

Contributors

Chauncey family
Fowler family