Guide to the George Jacob Abbot Papers

MS 28

Adapted by Thomas J. Connors

May 1979

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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New Haven, CT 06520-8240
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CALL NUMBER: MS 28

CREATOR: Abbot, George Jacob, 1812-1879

TITLE: George Jacob Abbot papers

DATES: 1811–1901

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1.5 linear feet (4 boxes, 1 folio)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Minister and diplomat. Correspondence largely relating to Abbot’s service as secretary to Daniel Webster and as an agent of the State Department in England and Canada. Included are 104 letters by Daniel Webster as well as copies of several of his speeches. State Department papers concerning controversies with England (1837-1852), newspaper clippings about Daniel Webster and miscellaneous receipts, inventories and photographs make up the remainder of the papers.

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:
b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of Wilkie Bushby in 1955.
Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
George Jacob Abbot Papers (MS 28). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical
George Jacob Abbot, son of the Rev. Jacob Abbot, a Unitarian minister, was born in Windham, N.H. He graduated from Harvard College in 1835, after which he opened a boys’ school in Washington, D.C. After a clerkship in the State Department, he became private secretary to Daniel Webster, this during Webster’s second term as Secretary of State (1850-1852).

Abbot served as United States consul at Bradford and Sheffield, England, from 1864 to 1870 and, returning to the U.S., was for several years a professor at the Theological School at Meadville, P.A. In 1877 he took another diplomatic position at Goderich and Windsor, Canada, which he maintained until his death.

More information as to Abbot and family may be found in Leonard A. Morrison’s History of Windham in New Hampshire, 1719-1883 (Boston: Cupples, Upham and Co., 1883).

Scope and Contents
The George Jacob Abbot Papers consist mainly of correspondence, drafts of speeches, unfinished drafts of U.S. State Department papers, newspaper clippings and other materials related to Abbot’s employment as secretary to Daniel Webster and to his diplomatic service. There are some Abbot family materials among the papers as well.

The correspondence consists of approximately 700 letters, of which 104 (1811-1852) are by Webster and 74 are to him, and 247 (1842-1878) are by Abbot and 175 to him. Nearly half of Abbot’s letters were written during his diplomatic service in England and Canada. Among the important correspondents are Thomas Stephenson, U.S. Consular Agent; Emory McClintock, Vice-consul at Sheffield; Prentiss Mellen, first Chief Justice of Maine; and judges Charles Jackson, James Kent, and Joseph Story. The correspondence is arranged chronologically, but the letters are individually catalogued in the Department’s manuscript catalogue, and a list of correspondents follow the folder listing.

The speeches include copies of Webster’s Fourth of July speech of 1851 and a speech delivered before the New York Historical Society in 1852. There are several copies of other speeches as well as notes and fragments pertaining to them. These are untitled and undated.

The State Department drafts relate to the British attack on the American steamer Caroline in 1837, to the fisheries dispute with England in 1851, and to the case of John S. Thrasher, and American being held in Cuba, 1851-1852.

The newspaper clippings are mainly reviews of Webster’s speeches and reports of his political activities.
Other materials, presumably related to Abbot’s secretarial duties, include receipts, inventories, lists of names and photographs. A folio contains a certificate of appointment, signed by Millard Fillmore and Daniel Webster, of George King Rogers to the U.S. Consulate in France and a chart of the square mileage of each state and territory of the United States.

Not directly related to Abbot’s employment is a draft deposition (ca. 1776) by Peter Green concerning loyalist activities in the colonies.

Abbot’s family is represented by a manuscript sermon of his father, Rev. Jacob Abbot (1768-1834); “A Record of the Last Days of Daniel Webster,” an unpublished manuscript by Mary J. C. Throop, Abbot’s daughter (b. 1842); and by school examination papers of Anna Abbot Throop, Abbot’s granddaughter (b. 1869). A printed sermon, *Discourse Delivered in Windham, N.H., November 5, 1834, at the Internment of Rev. Jacob Abbot* (Nashua, N.H.: Alfred Beard, 1835), has been transferred to the Yale Divinity Library.

The Daniel Webster materials were presumably gathered by Abbot for use in preparing the six volumes of the *Works of Daniel Webster* (Boston, 1851). Most of Edward Everett’s letters to Abbot refer to the editing and production of the *Works*. Apparently the Webster papers were also used by Mrs. Throop in preparing her manuscript.

The George Jacob Abbot Papers were given to Yale University Library by Wilkie Bushby in September 1955.

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**Arrangement**

Arranged in five sections: Correspondence, Writings, Photographs, Printed Matter, and Newspaper Clippings.
# Collection Contents

## Inventory

1.5 linear feet (4 boxes, 1 folio)

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<td>b. 2, f. 27</td>
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<td>b. 2, f. 28</td>
<td>Drafts of Daniel Webster’s Fourth of July speech</td>
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<td>b. 2, f. 29</td>
<td>Drafts of Daniel Webster’s Fourth of July speech</td>
<td>1851</td>
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<td>b. 2, f. 30</td>
<td>Drafts of Daniel Webster’s address to the New York Historical Society</td>
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<td>b. 2, f. 31</td>
<td>Speeches by Daniel Webster</td>
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<td>“A Record of the Last Days of Daniel Webster” by Mary J. C. Throop</td>
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<td>Drafts of U.S. Department of State papers re: the <em>Caroline</em> affair</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 35</td>
<td>Drafts of U.S. Department of State papers re: the John S. Thrasher case</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 37</td>
<td>Notes, fragments of speeches and other materials by Webster and others</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 38</td>
<td>Memoranda re: government, law and other matters</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 39</td>
<td>Lists, receipts and inventories re: Webster and Abbot</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 40</td>
<td>List of names and addresses, calling cards, and envelopes</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 41</td>
<td>Photographs of Webster’s birthplace and unidentified landscape</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous pamphlets by Daniel Webster and others</td>
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<td>“Sermon of my Grandfather, Rev. Jacob Abbot“</td>
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<td>b. 3, f. 45</td>
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<td>Peter Green’s deposition re: loyalty to Great Britain</td>
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<td>b. 4, f. 47-51</td>
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<td>b. 5</td>
<td>Certificate of appointment, signed by Millard Fillmore and Daniel Webster, of George King Rogers to the U.S. Consulate in France</td>
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<td>b. 5</td>
<td>Chart of the square mileage of each state and territory of the United States in 1793 and 1851</td>
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Appendix

List of Correspondents

Abbot, Ann T.G. (Emery) [2], 1851
Abbot George Jacob (including 10 to his wife, 4 to Edward Everitt, 102 to Emory McClintock, 3 to Mary J.C. (Abbot) Throop, 108 to U.S. Dept. of State, 4 to Daniel Webster) [247], 1842-1878
Adams, Charles Francis [1], 1893-1895, 1899, 1905
Allen, J.H. [3], 1851
Ames, C. [1], 1852
Andrews, J. DeWolf [9], 1851-1852
Appleton, William [3], 1861, n.d.
Archer, William Segar [1], 1852
Barnard, Daniel Dewey [1], 1852
Barnard, James S. [1], 1852
Barnett, John [1], 1852
Barney, John (5 tel., 1) [6], 1852
Bates, Issac C. [1], 1851
Bible Society of Washington [1], 1852
Bayly, B.S. [3], 1852
Bird, Josiah N. [1], 1852
Brooks, E. [1], 1851
Brosseau, A & Co. [1], 1865
Brown, John P. [1], 1851
Brunner, William & Co. [1], 1865
Buel, C.C. [1], 1900
Burritt, Elihu [1], 1870
Burwell, William M. [2], 1851
Cable, Joseph, 1852
Carazza, Lizzie [1], n.d.
Chandler, Joseph Ripley [1], 1850
Choate, Rufus [1], n.d.
Conrad, Charles M. [2], 1852
Cooper, James [1], 1851
Crampton, Sir John Fiens Twisleton [1], 1852,
Cupid, Josephine [1], 1851
Curtis, Edward [2], 1852
Curtis, George Ticknor [3], 1852-1859
Cushing, Caleb [1], 1858
Cutts, J. Madison [2], 1851-1852
Darby, William [1], 1851
Davis, George Thomas [2], 1852, n.d.
Dayton, William L. [2], n.d.
Dexter, Franklin [1], 1850
Dix, Dorothea Lynde [1], 1887,
Dorr, E. Richie [1], 1851
Dutton, Warren [1], 1830
Dudley, Thomas H. [1], 1868
Easby, William [1], 1851
Eckert, G.N. (as director of U.S. Mint) [1], 1851
Edgerton, Alfred Peck [1], 1852
Eliot, William G. [1], 1851
Ethridge, John [1], 1851
Evans, Henry G. [1], 1851,
Everett, Alexander Hill [1], 1851
Everett, Edward [20], 1851-1859
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Felton, Cornelius Conway [3], 1852-1860
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Foreman, E. [1], 1852
Fosdick, David [2], 1851
“Friends of Daniel Webster” [7], 1850-1851
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Gaitley, Kate [1], 1886
Gales, Joseph [1], 1851
Gaston, William [1], 1820
Gilman, Arthur [1], 1889
Gooch, William B. [1], 1851
Goodrich, Samuel Griswold [1], [1852?],
Goodrich, Charles J. [1], 1852
Goodrich, Zacheus [1], 1852
Gay (or Guy), William [1], 185-?
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Harrington, George [2], 1851
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Hayes, Caroline L. [1], 1851
Heyer, W. Grant [1], 1852
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Hunter, William [2], 1852
Jackson, Charles [4], 1830-1839
Jewett, Charles Coffin [4], 1851
Johnson, R. [1], 1851? (or 1861?)
Kebler, John [2], 1851
Kebler, Lucy (Abbot) [1], 1851
Kelly, Samuel [1], 1851
Kenney, B.G. [4], 1851
Kent, James [1], 1830
Ketchum, Hiram [5], 1852
Kiderlin, William L.J. [1], 1852
Kimball, Richard Burleigh [1], 1852
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Lander, Edward [1], 1853
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Stevenson, R.M. [3], 1865
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Totten, Joseph Gilbert [1], 1851
Ticknor, George [2], 1852
Trenton, N.J., Lawyers and Legislators [1], 1852
Train, George Francis [1], 1853
Unidentified [11], 1851-1892
U.S. Census Office [3], 1851
U.S. Department of the Interior [1] (folio), 1851
U.S. Department of State [18], 1850-1857
U.S. Department of State (Comm. to G.K. Rogers as Consul at Lyons) [1], 1852
U.S. Treasury Department [2], 1851-1865
U.S. War Department [1], 1851
U.S. Navy Department [1], 1851
Varnum, Joseph Bradley Jr. [1], 1851
Vick, Bushrod W. [2], 1852
Walsh, Charles T.?.. [1], 1851
Warren, G.W. [1], 1852
Webb, John F. [1], 1851
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Webster, Daniel (drafts & some originals including 15 to G.J. Abbot, 1851-1852, and 11 to Millard Fillmore, 1852) [104], 1811-1852
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Wood, George [1], 1851
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
Clergy
Diplomats
Fisheries -- United States

Geographic Names
Canada
Canada -- Foreign relations -- United States
Cuba -- Foreign relations -- United States
Europe
Great Britain -- Foreign relations -- United States
New England
United States -- Foreign relations
United States -- Foreign relations -- Canada
United States -- Foreign relations -- Cuba
United States -- Foreign relations -- Great Britain
United States -- History -- Revolution, 1775-1783
United States -- Politics and government

Genres / Formats
Photoprints

Names
Abbot, George Jacob, 1812-1879
Everett, Edward, 1794-1865
Fillmore, Millard, 1800-1874
Fuller, Hiram, 1814-1880
Jackson, Charles, 1775-1855
Jewett, Charles C. (Charles Coffin), 1816-1868
Kent, James, 1763-1847
King, Horatio, 1811-1897
Mellen, Prentiss, 1764-1840
Stephenson, Thomas
Story, Joseph, 1779-1845
Thrasher, J. S. (John Sidney), 1817-1879
Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852

Corporate Body
United States. Department of State