Guide to the Selden Family Papers

MS 673

compiled by Steve Hensen

March 1973

Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
mssa.assist@yale.edu
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
mssa.assist@yale.edu
http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/

CALL NUMBER: MS 673

CREATOR: Selden family

TITLE: Selden family papers

DATES: 1787–1883

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 3.83 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence, writings (including school essays and exercises, poetry and political essays), miscellaneous accounts, school bills, and other papers of the Selden family of Hadlyme, Connecticut. The principal family members represented are Richard Ely Selden (1797-1868), a member of the class of 1818 at Yale, a justice of the peace, and a state senator, and his son Samuel Hart Selden (1826-1891), a member of the class of 1848.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0673

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 http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0673.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to 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

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Transferred from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in 1973.
Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

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Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain.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

Preferred Citation
Selden Family Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical
Samuel Hart Selden was the second son of Richard Ely Selden (1797-1868), who graduated from Yale College in 1818, was a farmer and a member of the Connecticut State Senate in 1844. Samuel's mother was Elizabeth, daughter of William Lynde, of Saybrook, Connecticut. He was born in Hadlyme, in the township of Lyme, Connecticut, March 16, 1826.

After graduation from Yale College in 1848, it was his desire to study for the ministry, but his health did not permit. For a year he was a tutor in the family of William Denniston, in Salisbury Mills, New York, and thereafter followed the profession of civil engineering. From 1850 to 1862 he was engaged in railroad work, principally with the Erie & Pittsburgh Railroad, making his home at first in Batavia, New York, and afterwards in Erie and Girard, Pennsylvania. From 1862 to the time of his death he was connected with the Chicago & Northwestern Railway, as resident engineer in charge of the North Michigan Peninsula Division, residing for three years at Marquette, and from 1865 at Escanaba, Michigan.

On June 16, 1853, Selden married Sarah A., the eldest child of Oliver I. Lay, of Lyme, Connecticut. Mrs. Selden and five of their seven daughters outlived him. The third daughter is the wife of C. P. Coffin (Yale, 1881), and the fourth of T. H. Linsley (Yale, 1876s). Early in November 1891, Selden left Escanaba with his family for their winter home in Harrison, Florida. Making a few days' stop at Linsley's home in Evanston, Illinois, he was there taken ill with erysipelas and passed away on November 25, 1891, at the age of 65.

Selden was a man of winning presence, of strong character, and of deep religious convictions. For twenty-five years he was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. His life was blameless and his influence strongly felt in the community on the side of religion and morality.

(Derived from Yale Obituary Record, 1859-70 and 1880-1902).

Scope and Contents
Correspondence, writings (including school essays and exercises, poetry and political essays), miscellaneous accounts, school bills, and other papers of the Selden family of Hadlyme, Connecticut. The principal family members represented are Richard Ely Selden (1797-1868), a member of the class of 1818 at Yale, a justice of the peace, and a state senator, and his son Samuel Hart Selden (1826-1891), a member of the class of 1848.
Collection Contents
Inventory
The Selden Family Papers consists of correspondence, writings (including school essays and exercises, poetry, and political essays), and miscellaneous accounts, school bills, and other papers of the Selden family of Hadlyme, Connecticut. The papers relate principally however, to Richard Ely Selden, 1797-1868, who was a graduate of Yale University, class of 1818, a justice of the peace, and, in 1844, a member of the Connecticut state senate.

The correspondence, 1795-1862, consists primarily of letters to Richard Ely Selden, a significant number being from fellow members of the class of 1818; there are also some letters from family members. Also included in the correspondence are drafts of letters that Selden wrote to others, some of these being letters to the editors of local newspapers regarding topics of political or religious interest.

Among the writings are school essays and exercises, written by Richard Ely Selden and by his son, Samuel Hart Selden (Yale, 1848), with several “epic poems” by the former on political subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence</th>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 1</td>
<td>1795, 1815-1817</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 2</td>
<td>1818-1819</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 3</td>
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<td>1840-1842, 1844-1848, 1850-1851, 1862</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 6</td>
<td>Invitations sent to Richard E. Selden</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 7</td>
<td>Writings: poetry</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 8</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 9</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 10</td>
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<td>b. 1, f. 11</td>
<td>Selden family-miscellaneous</td>
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Accession 2018-M-0031. Additional Material

This accession comprises ledgers, farm records, and family papers documenting the Selden family's farm life in Lyme, Connecticut. The ledgers, 1787-1884, were maintained by Richard Ely Selden and record purchases and payments for goods and services and logs of employee's activities and pay. Transactions include business dealings for timber, grass, hay, fish, livestock, and produce. The ledgers primarily document the farm's business, but they also record births and deaths, marriages performed by Selden, poems, and other personal matters. The farm records, 1787-1845, comprise manuscript material pertaining to the farm's business operations. The family papers, 1812-1868, comprise clippings, writings, and poetry pertaining to the Selden family.

The accession is arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.

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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
Families

Geographic Names
Connecticut -- Politics and government
Hadlyme (Conn.) -- History
United States -- Politics and government

Occupations
Legislators
Politicians

Names
Selden, R. E. (Richard Ely), 1797-1868
Selden, Samuel Hart, 1826-1891

Families
Selden family

Corporate Bodies
Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1818
Yale University -- Students