# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .................................................................................................................. 3
Requesting Instructions .................................................................................................................. 3
Administrative Information ........................................................................................................... 3
  Immediate Source of Acquisition ............................................................................................... 3
  Conditions Governing Access ................................................................................................. 4
  Conditions Governing Use ....................................................................................................... 4
  Preferred Citation .................................................................................................................... 4
Biographical / Historical ............................................................................................................... 4
Scope and Contents ..................................................................................................................... 4
Collection Contents ..................................................................................................................... 5
  Inventory ................................................................................................................................. 5
Selected Search Terms ................................................................................................................ 6
Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 999

CREATOR: Hobart, Nathaniel, 1794-1840

TITLE: Nathaniel Hobart papers

DATES: 1837–1838

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Photostatic copies of letters written in the form of a diary by Nathaniel Hobart to members of his family on trips to the West and the South, 1837-1838. Principal cities described are New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and Niagara Falls. As a Swedenborgian, he also comments on religion and philosophy.

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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 Geoffrey Hobart Byrne, 1949.
Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
Nathaniel Hobart Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical
Nathaniel Hobart was born in Abington, Massachusetts, on August 30, 1794. He attended Harvard in 1813. He traveled throughout the southeastern United States, Michigan, and Wisconsin, from 1837 to 1838. Hobart died in the steamer Lexington disaster on January 13, 1840.

Scope and Contents
Photostatic copies of letters written in the form of a diary by Nathaniel Hobart to members of his family on trips to the West and the South, 1837-1838. Principal cities described are New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and Niagara Falls. As a Swedenborgian, he also comments on religion and philosophy.
Collection Contents

Inventory

This collection consists of a single bound volume containing photostatic copies of letters written in the form of a diary by Nathaniel Hobart (d. 1840) to members of his family during “a long journey West and South” in 1837-1838. His wife, Lydia, transcribed his letters for her children, as she explains in a letter prefaced to the volume, and it is her transcriptions which have been photocopied and bound.

Hobart, a Bostonian, may have been a merchant. His trip took him through New England south to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, through Tennessee, and back through Washington, D.C., and Delaware to Boston. The cities through which he passed are described in an interesting fashion with special attention being given to New Orleans and Washington, D.C. Hobart digresses to discuss his views on religion and philosophy. A Swedenborgian, he was the author of several books on Swedenborg, including The Life of Emanuel Swedenborg (1830). While traveling in the South, he often comments on the southern way of life and sets forth his observations on slavery (see particularly pp. 90-102).

The letters also contain an account of a second journey which Hobart made in May of 1838 through the Great Lakes region, going as far west as Michigan and Wisconsin. He describes the cities he visited, the greatest detail being given to Niagara Falls.

Page 108 of the volume is missing, and pages 171-177 are out of place. The volume was presented by Geoffrey Hobart Byrne to Chauncey Brewster Tinker in 1949, and he in turn donated it to Yale in 1950. The current owner of the original letters is unknown.

| b. 1, f. 1 | Volume of photostatic copies of letters from Nathaniel Hobart (d. 1840) | 1837–1838 |
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

Geographic Names
Southern States -- Description and travel
United States -- Description and travel
West (U.S.) -- Description and travel

Genres / Formats
Diaries

Names
Hobart, Lydia
Hobart, Nathaniel, 1794-1840

Corporate Body
New Jerusalem Church