

Guide to the Woodruff Family Papers

MS 1143



compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

May 2001

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1143

CREATOR: Woodruff family

TITLE: Woodruff family papers

DATES: 1770-1927

BULK DATES: 1832-1927

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 12.5 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection contains correspondence, photographs, diaries, writings, and genealogical material pertaining to the Woodruff and allied families.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1143>

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.1143>.

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

Gift of the Lewis B. Woodruff estate in 1925; gift of H. Allen Brooks, 2000.

Conditions Governing Access

Accessions 2001-M-034 and 2004-M-092 are unprocessed and may contain sensitive information or be in a physical state that would prohibit use. Researchers wishing to request access should email beinecke.library@yale.edu requesting specific box numbers in order to initiate the review process, which may take several weeks.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for 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

Woodruff Family Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Associated Materials

Brooks Family Papers (MS 1784), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

The Woodruff family was one of the founding families of Litchfield, Connecticut. The principals represented in the papers include: George Catlin Woodruff (1805-1885), George Morris Woodruff (1836-1990), Charles Hornblower Woodruff (1836-1915), and Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (1868-1925), all of whom attended Yale University, and their spouses from the Bowne and Parsons families of Flushing, New York.

GEORGE CATLIN WOODRUFF, 1805-1885

George Catlin Woodruff, eldest son of Gen. Morris Woodruff and Candace (Catlin) Woodruff, was born in Litchfield (South Farms, now Morris), Conn., December 1, 1805.

After graduating he studied law under Judge Gould at the Litchfield Law School, and was admitted to the bar in September, 1827. After visiting Pennsylvania and Eastern Connecticut for the purpose of selecting a place for business, he returned to Litchfield, where he remained in the practice of his profession till his death, holding many positions of trust and responsibility. He was a member of the State Legislature in the years 1851, 1866, and 1874, and Representative of the Fourth Congressional District of Connecticut in the 37th Congress. He died at his home in Litchfield, after a brief illness, November 21, 1885, in the 80th year of his age.

On September 28, 1829, he married Henrietta S. Seymour, sister of the late Chief Justice Origen S. Seymour (Y.C. 1824), who survives him. By her he had two children, a daughter who died in infancy and a son, George M. Woodruff (Y.C. 1857), who is still living.

Mr. Woodruff's only literary undertaking was a brief History of Litchfield, published in 1845 (64 pp. 8vo), of characteristic accuracy and thoroughness. In his professional relations he was notable for the clearness and solidity of his reasoning, and no less for the absolute integrity which governed his actions.

(*Yale College Obituary Record*, 1880-1890, page 287)

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CHARLES HORNBLOWER WOODRUFF, B.A. 1858

Born October 1, 1836, in Newark, N.J. Died May 4, 1915, in Litchfield, Conn.

Charles Hornblower Woodruff was born on October 1, 1836, in Newark, N.J., the son of Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (B.A. 1830, LL.D. Columbia 1860). The latter's parents were General Morris Woodruff, a descendant of Nathaniel Woodruff, one of the first settlers of the town of Litchfield, Conn., and of Matthew Woodruff, one of the eighty-four original proprietors of Farmingont, and Candace, daughter of Lewis Catlin of Harwinton, Conn., one of whose ancestors was Thomas Catlin, an early settler of Hartford. His mother was Harriette Burnet, daughter of Chief Justice Joseph Coerten Hornblower of New Jersey and Mary (Burnet) Hornblower. He entered Yale from Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., and in college was a member of Linonia.

His preparation for the law, which he had decided to follow as a profession, was received at Harvard, where he spent the academic year of 1859-1860, and at Columbia, from which he was graduated with the degree of LL.B. In 1861. He also received the honorary degree of M.A. From Yale in 1865.

He was admitted to the bar of New York in May, 1861, and after spending part of the following autumn in an office, began practice in New York City on January 1, 1862. For six years he was associated with his father and Charles F. Sanford (B.A. 1847), an uncle of his wife, subsequently judge of the Superior Court of New York, under the firm name of Sanford & Woodruff. Upon the withdrawal of the elder Woodruff, upon his appointment as a judge of the Court of Appeals of New York State, Mr. Edward Randolph Robinson joined the firm, which became Sanford, Robinson & Woodruff, and with which Mr. Woodruff continued until 1875. From that time he practiced independently until 1896; then with his son Frederick, until 1902, when he retired.

He was until his death a member of the Bar Association in the City of New York, and belonged to the Society of the Cincinnati in New Jersey, the Society of Colonial Wars, the New England Society, and the Sons of the Revolution, all of the state of New York, being for many years on the board of managers of the latter organization. He was the first president of the Phillips Academy Alumni Association in New York, and had long served as an elder in the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church of that city. He had traveled to quite an extent both in this country and abroad.

In recent years, Mr. Woodruff had spent much of his time in Litchfield, Conn., where he had long had a summer home, and where his death occurred, from a cerebral hemorrhage, on May 4, 1915. Interment was in the East Cemetery in Litchfield.

His marriage took place on June 30, 1863, in New Haven, Conn., to Catherine Gertrude Laing, daughter of William Elihu and Margaret Louise (Craney) Sanford, who survives him with two of their sons: Lewis Bartholomew, a graduate of the College in 1890 and of the New York Law School in 1892, and Frederick Sanford, who took a B.A. at Yale in 1892. Their oldest son died at birth, and the deaths of the two youngest, —Charles Hornblower, Jr., who was a non-graduate member of the Class of 1896, and Edward Seymour, a graduate of the College in 1899 and of the School of Forestry in 1907,—occurred within a month of each other in 1909. Mr. Woodruff's brother, Morris, was a member of the Class of 1860, and the latter's two sons, —Morris and George W.L.,—also graduated from Yale, the former with the degree of B.A. in 1893 and the latter with that of Ph.B. in 1895.

(*Yale College Obituary Record*, 1910-1915, pages 747-749)

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GEORGE MORRIS WOODRUFF, B.A. 1857

Born March 3, 1836, in Litchfield, Conn. Died April 29, 1930, in Litchfield, Conn.

Father, George Catlin Woodruff (B.A. 1825), a lawyer; judge of Probate Court; member of Connecticut Legislature and member of Congress; Colonel in Connecticut State Militia; son of Morris Woodruff, Major General in Connecticut Militia, and Candace (Catlin) Woodruff, of Litchfield. Mother, Henrietta Sophronia (Seymour) Woodruff; daughter of Ozias and Selima (Storrs) Seymour, and sister of Origen S. Seymour (B.A. 1824), of Litchfield. Yale relatives include: Horatio Seymour (B.A. 1797) (great-uncle); Lewis B. Woodruff

(B.A. 1830) (uncle), his sons, Charles H. Woodruff, '58 (with his sons, Lewis B. Woodruff, '90, Frederick S. Woodruff, '92, and Charles H. Woodruff, Jr., ex -'96), and Morris Woodruff, '60 (with his sons, Morris Woodruff, '93, and George W.L. Woodruff, '95 S.); and the following cousins: John F. Seymour (B.A. 1835), his son, Horatio Seymour, '67, and his grandson, Horatio Seymour, '07 S., Edward W. Seymour, '53, Storrs O. Seymour, '57, and Morris W. Seymour, '66, his son, Origen S. Seymour, '94, and his grandson, Morris W. Seymour, ex- '29.

Phillips-Andover. Third dispute appointment Junior year; second dispute appointment Senior year; member Alida Boat Club, Presentation Day Committee, Linonia, Kappa Sigma Epsilon, and Psi Upsilon.

Studied law with his father in Litchfield 1857-1858 and at Harvard Law School 1858-1859; admitted to the bar in Litchfield Septemebr 14, 1859, and had since practiced law in that town, his son, James P. Woodruff, '93 L., having been associated with him since 1894 under the firm name of George M. and James P. Woodruff; judge of probate for District of Litchfield 1868-1906, with the exception of the year 1871-1872; treasurer of the town 1860-1906; town clerk 1865-1868; justice of the peace 1860-1906; appointed assistant clerk of the Superior Court in 1862 but served only a short time; member of the Connecticut General Assembly in 1863, 1865, and 1872; appointed by Governor English in 1867 to serve on a commission to examine and report on military system of Connecticut; commissioner to Universal Exposition in Hamburg in 1863; state railroad commissioner 1874-1897, president of the board 1875-1897); in 1913 appointed representative from Connecticut to a conference for solving the railroad problems of the New England states; president of Litchfield Savings Bank since 1885 (a director since 1870), of the First National Bank of Litchfield since 1899 (director 1887-1890 and since 1896), and of Litchfield Mutual Fire Insurance Company since 1902 (director since 1878 and treasurer 1885-1902); director of Connecticut branch of Citizen's League for the Promotion of Sound Banking; an organizer of Colonial Trust Company of Waterbury, Conn., in 1899 (director until death, second vice-president and trust officer to 1907 and first vice-president since 1907); served on Connecticut State Board of Education 1865-1877; deacon in Litchfield Congregational Church since 1867; vice-president and president (1895-1897) of Connecticut Congregational Club; president White Memorial Association since 1913; life member Connecticut and Litchfield Historical societies; corporate member American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missionaries; member American and Connecticut State Bar associations, Connecticut Civil Service Reform Association, Archaeological Institute of America, American Historical Association, and The Sanctum (president at death); former president of Litchfield County University Club.

Married June 13, 1860, in Flushing, N.Y., Elizabeth Ferris, daughter of James Bowne and Eliza Ferris (Cock) Parsons. Children: George Catlin, ex- '85 (B.A. Amherst 1885) (died March 17, 1929); Eliza Parsons, the wife of Alexander McNeill, Lafayette ex -'85; and James Parsons (B.A. Amherst 1891, M.A. 1894, LL.B. Yale 1893, LL.M. 1894). Mrs. Woodruff died May 14, 1911.

Death due to colliquative diarrhoea and heart block. Buried in New East Cemetery, Litchfield. Survived by one son, daughter, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

(*Yale College Obituary Record*, 1928-1931, pages 5-6)

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LEWIS BARTHOLOMEW WOODRUFF, B.A. 1890

Born January 1, 1868, in New York City. Died November 27, 1925, in Torrington, Conn.

Father, Charles Hornblower Woodruff (B.A. 1858, LL.B. Columbia 1861, M.A. Yale, 1865), a lawyer in New York City; son of Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (B.A. 1830, LL.D. Columbia 1860), justice of Superior Court of New York City and a United States Circuit Court judge, and Harriette Burnet (Hornblower) Woodruff; grandson of Morris Woodruff, a Major General of Connecticut Militia; descendent of Nathaniel Woodruff, one of the first settlers and proprietors of Litchfield, Conn., and of Matthew Woodruff, who came to America from England about 1630 and was one of the original proprietors of the town of Farmington, Conn. Mother, Catherine Gertrude Laing (Sanford) Woodruff; daughter of William Elihu and Margaret Louis (Craney) Sanford; granddaughter of John Craney, who came from Ireland to New York City in 1804; descendant of Thomas Sanford, who came from England to Dorchester, Mass., in 1632. Yale relatives include: Frederick S. Woodruff, '92, Carl Woodruff, ex- '96, and Edward S. Woodruff, '99 (brothers); George

C. Woodruff (B.A. 1825) and Charles F. Sanford (B.A. 1847) (great-uncles); Morris Woodruff, '60, George M. Woodruff, '57, Charles P. Sanford, '76, Morris Woodruff, '93, James P. Woodruff, '93 L., Origen S. Seymour, '94, George W.L. Woodruff, '95 S., and Morris W. Seymour, '28 (cousins).

Columbia Grammar School, New York City; also studied with a private tutor. Second dispute appointments Junior and Senior years; member College Choir.

Attended Columbia Law School 1890-1891 and New York Law School 1891-1892, receiving an LL.B. at the latter institution in 1892; entered law office of Hornblower, Byrne & Taylor in New York City 1891; became managing clerk for firm in April, 1893; admitted to the New York Bar October 1, 1893; practiced with Hornblower, Byrne, Miller & Potter (having full charge of preparation of railroad mortgages for many years) until 1917 and then independently for two years; since 1919 had devoted practically all his time to study and original research in natural sciences, especially entomology and ornithology, in which he was a recognized authority; had a desk at the Museum of Natural History in New York City for a time, and in the spring of 1925 was sent by that institution to the Virgin Islands, where he was engaged in an entomological survey for three months; had published numerous papers in various scientific journals and prepared the manuscript for a part of Leng's Catalogue of the Coleoptera of North America; had extensive collections, especially complete in the fauna of the Atlantic seaboard; member American Ornithological Union, Entomological Society of Ontario, New York Entomological Society (president in 1918, 1919, and 1920), Academy of Science of the State of New York, Linnean Society of New York (treasurer 1902-1921), New York chapter of Sons of the Revolution, New Jersey branch of Order of the Cincinnati, Society of Colonial Wars, and Marble Collegiate Church (Dutch Reformed), New York City.

Married June 18, 1904, in Birmingham, Ala., Helen E., daughter of Oscar Emmet and Emma (West) Smith. No children. Mrs. Woodruff died October 12, 1924.

Death, due to typhoid fever, occurred at the Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington. Interment in Litchfield, where he had a summer home. Survived by no immediate relatives. By the terms of his will his residuary estate was left to Yale University to further the usefulness of the Museum of Natural History and the departments of the natural sciences.

(*Yale College Obituary Record*, 1925-1928, pages 145-147)

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FREDERICK SANFORD WOODRUFF, B.A. 1892

Born October 21, 1869, in New York City. Died June 12, 1917, in New York City.

Frederick Sanford Woodruff was born in New York City, October 21, 1869, the son of Charles Honblower Woodruff (B.A. 1858, LL.B. Columbia 1861) and Catherine Gertrude Laing (Sanford) Woodruff. He was a descendant of Matthew Woodruff, who came to this country from England about 1630 and was one of the eighty-four original proprietors of Farmington, Conn., and of Nathaniel Woodruff, one of the earliest settlers in Litchfield, Conn. His paternal grandparents were Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (B.A. 1830, LL.D. Columbia 1860), who served on the bench for a number of years, at the time of his death in 1875 being a judge of the Circuit Court of the United States for the Second Judicial Circuit, and Harriette Burnet (Hornblower) Woodruff, daughter of Chief Justice Joseph Coerten Hornblower of New Jersey and Mary (Burnet) Hornblower. His great-grandfather, Morris Woodruff, was major general of Connecticut Militia, held numerous political and judicial offices, and was a presidential elector in 1832. His mother was the daughter of William Elihu and Margaret Louise (Craney) Sanford, and a niece of Charles F. Sanford (B.A. 1847). She traced her descent to Thomas Sanford, who emigrated to this country from England in 1632 and settled at Dorchester, Mass.

He was fitted for Yale at the Columbia grammar School and at the Collegiate School of Duane L. Everson in New York City.

After graduation in 1892 he spent several months abroad, on his return to this country entering the New York Law School. In June, 1894, he was admitted to the bar of the state of New York, and then spent two years as a clerk in the office of Root & Clark, of which firm Elihu Root was senior partner. He became associated with his father in practice in 1896, remaining in that connection until the latter's retirement,

when he became a member of the firm of Gulick, Woodruff & Marsh, in which his partners were Alexander R. Gulick (B.A. Princeton 1889, M.A. Princeton 1892, LL.B. New York Law School 1892) and Rolph Marsh (B.A. Williams 1892, LL.B. New York Law School 1894). Since 1902 Mr. Woodruff had conducted an independent practice. He was a member of the University Club of New York, for many years making it his second home. He was also a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, the Sons of the Revolution, of which he had been vice-president and long on the board of managers, the society of Colonial Wars, the Military Society of the War of 1812, and the Veteran Corps of Artillery. He belonged to the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church of New York City.

Mr. Woodruff died June 12, 1917, at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, after a long illness due to a kidney disorder. Interment was in the family plot in the East Cemetery in Litchfield, Conn.

He was unmarried, and is survived by a brother, Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (B.A. 1890, LL.B. New York Law School 1892). Two other brothers had attended Yale: Charles H. Woodruff, Jr., a non-graduate member of the College Class of 1896, and Edward Seymour Woodruff, who received the degree of B.A. in 1899 and that of M.F. in 1907. Mr. Woodruff was a nephew of Morris Woodruff (B.A. 1860, Honorary M.A. 1874), and a cousin of Morris Woodruff, a graduate of the College in 1893, and George W.L. Woodruff (Ph.B. 1895, E.E. Columbia 1896).

(Yale College Obituary Record, 1915-1920, pages 399-401)

Scope and Contents

The collection contains correspondence, photographs, diaries, writings, and genealogical material pertaining to the Woodruff and allied families.

Collection Contents

Original accession

b. 1, f. 1	Devens, Charles (1820-1891): receipts for military expenditures	1861
b. 1, f. 2	Hornblower, Joseph G. (1777-1864): ALS to his daughter, Harriette Burnet (Hornblower) Woodruff	1857
Woodruff, Charles Hornblower (1836-1915; Y. 1858)		
b. 1, f. 3	Certificate of admission to Yale College	1854
b. 1, f. 3	ALS to his parents, Lewis B. and Harriette (Hornblower) Woodruff	1854
b. 1, f. 3	Accounts of college expenses	1854-1859
b. 1, f. 4	Woodruff, Frederick Sanford (1869-1917; Y. 1892): ALS to Charles Hornblower Woodruff (1872-1909)	1897
b. 1, f. 5	Woodruff, George C. (1805-1885; Y. 1825): two ALS to Lewis B. Woodruff	1835
b. 1, f. 6	Woodruff, George M. (1836-1930); Y. 1857): ALS to Miss Lottie G. Bishop re town-gown riot of 1854	1927
b. 1, f. 7	Woodruff, Helen (Smith) (1888-1924) (Mrs. Lewis): bride's book	1904
Woodruff, Lewis B. (1868-1925; Y. 1890)		
b. 1, f. 8	Diary of a Mediterranean cruise	1899
b. 1, f. 8	Diary of a trip to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands	1925
Photographs		
b. 1, f. 9 - 11	Elijah Forbes	[1880s]
b. 1, f. 11	Elihu Lyman [photograph of portrait]	[1880s]
b. 1, f. 11	Hervey Sanford and his wife	[1880s]
b. 1, f. 11	Morris Woodruff (1777-1840) and his wife, Candace (Catlin) Woodruff	[1880s]
b. 1, f. 11	Lewis Bartholomew Woodruff (1809-1875) and his wife, Harriette Burnet (Hornblower) Woodruff (1810-1875)	[1880s]
b. 2, f. 12	Rugby School: examination papers	1913
b. 2, f. 13	Charles H. Woodruff: house plans	1891-1901
b. 2, f. 14	Henry Woodruff: legal papers	1882-1891
Genealogy		
b. 2, f. 15 - 23	Notes, charts, coats of arms, etc., pertaining to the Carlin, Camp, Alling, Burnet, Plumb and Woodruff families	undated

Accession 2001-M-034: Additional Material

The material is unprocessed and may contain sensitive information or be in a physical state that would prohibit use. Researchers wishing to request access should email beinecke.library@yale.edu requesting specific box numbers in order to initiate the review process, which may take several weeks.

b. 1	Class books, writings, correspondence, mostly of George M. Woodruff
b. 2	Diaries, photograph albums
b. 3	Photographs, correspondence [includes documentation on Ruth McNeil Coe]
b. 4	Photographs
b. 5	Photographs, writings
b. 6	Correspondence, cookbooks, writings [from steamer trunk -see description for box 7]
b. 7	Deeds, correspondence [from steamer trunk -see note in box about trunk contents]
b. 8	Correspondence, diaries, photographs [see note in box about contents]
b. 9	Correspondence, wills [from Chinese box and writing desk]
b. 10-11	Photographs

Accession 2004-M-092: Additional Material, Undated

The material is unprocessed and may contain sensitive information or be in a physical state that would prohibit use. Researchers wishing to request access should email beinecke.library@yale.edu requesting specific box numbers in order to initiate the review process, which may take several weeks.

b.1	Correspondence, photographs, and books regarding various family members	Undated
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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
Lawyers

Geographic Names

Europe -- Description and travel
Flushing (New York, N.Y.)
West Indies

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Names

Woodruff, Charles Hornblower, 1836-1915
Woodruff, George C. (George Catlin),
1805-1885
Woodruff, Lewis Bartholomew, 1868-1925

Families

Alling family
Burnett family
Camp family
Catlin family
Plum family
Woodruff family

Corporate Bodies

Yale University -- Costs
Yale University -- Students