

Guide to the Asa Blair Papers

MS 84



compiled by Nancy Fappiano

May 1981

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 84

CREATOR: Blair, Asa, 1784-1823

TITLE: Asa Blair papers

DATES: 1809-1848

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Pastor, Congregational Church, Kent, Connecticut. Chiefly letters to his wife during a trip to the South (1822) in which he describes Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D. C. and Mount Vernon. A letter of Dec 2, 1822, describes the use of opium during his illness. Also in the collection are the correspondence of his wife Mira A. Blair and miscellaneous legal documents.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0084>

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.0084>.

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

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Asa Blair Papers (MS 84). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

Asa Blair, the second son of Captain Asa and Mehitable (Carnahan) Blair, of Blandford, Massachusetts, and grandson of Deacon Robert and Hannah (Thompson) Blair, of Western (now Warren) and Blandford, was born on May 12, 1784. He did not enter Yale until the Senior year. After graduation he studied theology with the Rev. Ebenezer Porter (Dartmouth Coll. 1791), of Washington, Connecticut, and was licensed to preach in 1811 by the Litchfield South Association of Ministers. On May 26, 1813, he was ordained and installed as pastor of the Congregational Church in Kent, in the immediate vicinity of Washington, where he exercised a useful ministry for about nine years. He received one hundred and seventy members to the church. Failing health led him on the approach of winter in 1822 to seek a Southern climate; and he died, on January 13, 1823, in Georgetown, South Carolina, in his 39th year, from typhus fever, after nineteen days' illness. He married Myra [sic] Ann, daughter of Dr. John Raymond, of Kent, who survived him with one son.

From Dexter's Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale's College.

Scope and Contents

The Reverend Asa Blair Papers consist primarily of letters he wrote to his wife, Mira Ann (Raymond) Blair, as he traveled in the United States seeking a climate to improve his health. Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. are among the cities Blair visited, and he commented extensively on both the locale and the inhabitants. In a letter of May 1, 1822, for example, he wrote "that Washington is behind no other place in wickedness-" Even some of the members of congress had stimulated too much to walk straight & swore like pirates." Blair also wrote of slavery and the lack of interest in religion in the Southern cities. Of special interest is his letter of December 2, 1822, in which he speaks of using opium to combat his illness.

Also included in the papers are letters to Mira (Raymond) Blair (1827-1848), and legal documents of Mira R. Blair and John Raymond, her father.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Letters written by Asa Blair to his wife Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1822 April-May
b. 1, f. 2	Letters written by Asa Blair to his wife Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1882 November- Dec, undated
b. 1, f. 3	Letter written by Asa Blair to William Blair [his brother] with biographical notes by Marion Brayton (Mrs. C. W.) Barrows	1809, undated
b. 1, f. 4	Letters written by Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1822-1823
b. 1, f. 5	Letters to Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1827-1838
b. 1, f. 6	Letters to Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1839-1844
b. 1, f. 7	Letters to Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1847-1848
b. 1, f. 8	Letter to John M. Raymond from William Watson	1835 October 30
b. 1, f. 9	Letter and legal documents concerning the death of Asa Blair	1823
b. 1, f. 10	Legal papers of John M. Raymond and Mira A. (Raymond) Blair	1833-1843, undated
b. 1, f. 11	Acknowledgment of Asa Blair's membership in the American Bible Society	? May 30
b. 1, f. 11	Receipt for John R. Blair's membership in the American Tract Society	1832 April 23
b. 1, f. 12	Lock of hair from John R. Blair	1858 July
b. 1, f. 13	<i>The Traveller's Directory Through the United States</i> , by John Melish	1822

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
Opium abuse

Geographic Names

Baltimore (Md.)
Mount Vernon (Va. : Estate)
Mount Vernon (Va.)
Philadelphia (Pa.)
United States -- Description and travel -- Early works to 1800
Washington (D.C.)

Names

Blair, Asa, 1784-1823

Corporate Bodies

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1810
Yale University -- Students