

GUIDE TO THE HITCHCOCK FAMILY PAPERS

Scope and Content Note

The Hitchcock Family Papers have been received as gifts by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association from several sources over many years. The collection numbers just over 400 items, and date between 1731 and 1979.

The papers are those of and relating to the descendants of Luke [d. 1659] and Elizabeth (Gibbons) Hitchcock [d. 1696] of Wethersfield, Connecticut, through their sons John and Luke. The number that accompanies names in the notes below refers to the number assigned to the individual by George Sheldon in genealogical notes on the Hitchcock family in the second volume of his *History of Deerfield* [1895]. Many of the following biographical notes were selected from that source and from *The Genealogy of the Hitchcock Family*, compiled and published by Mrs. Edward Hitchcock, Jr. [Amherst, Mass., 1894].

Biographical Notes and Description of Series

John Hitchcock⁴, son of Deacon John² and Hannah (Chapin) Hitchcock, was born in Springfield, Mass., on April 13, 1670. On September 24, 1691 he married Mary Ball of Springfield and the couple had 11 children, one of whom is mentioned below. He received two shares of the township granted to survivors of the Falls Fight [Turners Falls, Mass., 1676] and their descendants and bequeathed them to his son John. He died in 1751, his widow in 1760.

He is represented by two items: a deed to land in Brookfield, Mass., dated 1731, and a copy of his will, dated December 12, 1750.

Samuel Hitchcock⁷, son of Ensign John⁴ and Mary (Ball) Hitchcock, was born in Springfield, Mass., on June 9, 1717. On June 11, 1738, he married Ruth Stebbins of Springfield and the couple had twelve children, one of whom is named below. Ruth died in 1775, Samuel in 1777.

His papers are deeds to land with two exceptions, a release by members of his family for having satisfactorily settled their father's estate (1751) and an undated memorandum containing birthdates of Samuel, his wife and their children.

Samuel Hitchcock, son of Samuel⁷ and Ruth Stebbins Hitchcock, was born in Springfield, Mass., on December 16, 1744. He served as private in the Revolutionary War and later became captain of the militia. In 1770 he married Thankful Hawks of Deerfield and that year the couple was one of three families who settled in the "Plantation of Number Seven," later called Hawley, Mass. The couple had 11 children, three of whom are mentioned below. Samuel died in 1819, his widow in 1829.

Most of his papers are deeds to land, mainly in Hawley, which he purchased or granted. In addition there is a letter of 1880 from Moses Bliss of Springfield, a copy of Samuel's will with attached certificate directed to his son Eli, as executor of his father's estate, and an undated memorandum relating to Samuel and his wife Thankful.

Ethan Hitchcock, eldest son of Samuel and Thankful Hitchcock, was born in Hawley on October 18, 1773. He first married Lydia Farnsworth and the couple had nine children. The year after her death, in 1821, he married Mrs. Catherine Lilly. Ethan died in 1866, his wife in 1842.

Erastus Hitchcock, son of Samuel and Thankful Hitchcock, was born in Hawley on October 18, 1787. In 1811 he married Naomi Jones of Dover, Vermont. The couple had nine children. Erastus died in Hawley in 1831.

Eli Hitchcock, youngest son of Samuel and Thankful Hitchcock, was born in Hawley on February 2, 1789. His wife, Annjeannette Blood, died in Boston in February 1854; Eli died of cholera in New York, later that year.

The papers of Ethan, Erastus, and Eli Hitchcock are filed together. Ethan is represented by two deeds to land in Hawley and a receipt for a newspaper subscription; Erastus by one deed to land in Hawley; and Eli by two deeds to land in Hawley.

Luke Hitchcock⁸, son of Luke⁵ and Martha (Colton) Hitchcock, was born in Springfield, Mass., in 1724. He moved to Granville, Mass., in 1756, and became a prominent citizen of the town. In 1747 he married Lucy Merrick of Springfield; the couple had 12 children, one of whom is named below. Luke served in the Revolutionary War, and in 1777 was in the army opposed to Burgoyne. He became ill and died on the way home on August 9, 1777.

Lucy (Merrick) Hitchcock, a daughter of Thomas and Abigail (Munn) Merrick, was born in Springfield. She married Luke Hitchcock in 1747 and they moved to Granville in 1756. Her husband died in 1777; Lucy in December 1791.

Luke and Lucy Hitchcock are each represented by one paper: Luke by a memorandum, dated about 1777, containing the date of his marriage and the dates his children were born; Lucy by a paper relating to the division of her personal property among her children, December 1791.

Justin Hitchcock⁹, son of Luke⁸ and Lucy (Merrick) Hitchcock, was born in Springfield, Mass., on May 27, 1752, and moved with his parents when a young child to Granville, Mass. He learned the hatter's trade in Springfield and lived there until 1774, when he moved to Deerfield. He was a fifer in a company of minute men, and in 1777 served in a company of militia called out to check Burgoyne's advance from Canada. As a deacon in the Deerfield church, Hitchcock led the church choir for many years. He also served Deerfield as town clerk and sealer of weights and measures. In 1779, he married Mercy, daughter of David and Silence Hoyt of Deerfield, and the couple had five children, four of whom are mentioned below. Justin died in 1822, his widow in 1834.

The papers of Justin Hitchcock include an indenture (1766) of an agreement by which he became apprenticed to Moses Church; several letters he received from his father and a note the latter wrote to James Church for advice on a place for Justin to set up as a hatter; a power of attorney to act for his sisters in obtaining their inheritance from their mother (1792); his appointments as Deerfield sealer of weights and measures; the manuscript of an address he delivered at Barnard Hall on July 4, 1798; and copies by his grandson, Nathaniel Hitchcock, and his great grandson, John Sawyer Hitchcock, of Justin's autobiographical and genealogical notes. A large part of the papers, however, are receipts for taxes paid and material relating to the settlement of his estate. An interesting undated item is a volume of his musical compositions [formerly MSS M-L no. 4623 in the P.V.M.A. collection].

Mercy (Hoyt) Hitchcock, daughter of David and Silence Hoyt, was born in the old "Indian House" in Deerfield on October 24, 1755. She and Justin Hitchcock were married on November 25, 1799 and were parents of five children. Mercy died in 1834.

Her papers consist of an undated manuscript about dreams, addressed to "Miss Mercy Hoyt" [by Justin Hitchcock?] and two deeds to land in Deerfield, the earlier received as a bequest from her father.

Charissa Hitchcock, eldest child of Justin and Mercy Hoyt Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on January 13, 1781. In 1803, she married Dr. Jonathan Swett and they settled in Medina, New York. The couple had four children. Charissa died in Ridgeway, New York, on June 1, 1855.

The couple is represented by two items: a letter they received from Justin Hitchcock, dated February 1, 1822; the other a typed memorandum by George Sheldon (1906) relating to silhouettes of Charissa and Jonathan in Memorial Hall, and to a gown presented to Charissa before her wedding in 1803.

Henry Hitchcock,¹¹ son of Justin and Mercy Hoyt Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on November 6, 1783. He was a deacon of the church and a saddler by trade. On October 29, 1810, he married Betsey Kimberly of West Haven, Connecticut. The couple had two sons and two daughters. Henry died on August 19, 1861.

His papers include two deeds to land in the East Mountain section of Deerfield; a license to make saddles and bridles (1815); and two receipts, one for taxes paid, the other for medical fees paid. Filed with his papers are undated gatherings, in an unidentified hand, which offer words of advice on behavior and religion, remarks on winds and weather, and a long memorandum on the state of the union, highly critical of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Betsey (Kimberly) Hitchcock, daughter of Captain Nathaniel Kimberly of West Haven, Connecticut, and wife of Henry Hitchcock¹¹ appears to have lived in Deerfield from the time of her marriage in 1810 until her death on January 16, 1878.

She is represented by a formal note, indicating that she would receive friends on the morning of April 12, 1854, and a commonplace book, apparently begun about 1813 when she was a schoolgirl. Filed with her papers is a 1792 letter her father wrote to her grandfather, Nathaniel Smith, of West Haven.

Nathaniel Hitchcock¹⁴, son of Henry and Betsey Kimberly Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on June 22, 1812. He became a farmer, a deacon of the church, and served as secretary and treasurer of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association from the time it was organized. He lived on the old homestead. On November 28, 1840, he married Calista Childs. Their only child, James, served with the Massachusetts Volunteers in the Civil War, was captured, and died in Andersonville prison in 1864.

Calista (Childs) Hitchcock, daughter of Erastus and Mercy (Hawks) Childs of Deerfield, was born on July 5, 1819. She and Nathaniel Hitchcock¹⁴ were married in 1840 and had one son. Calista's death occurred sometime between 1896; the death of her husband occurred on March 3, 1900.

The earliest items among the papers of Nathaniel and Calista Hitchcock are three deeds to land in Deerfield, one granted to Nathaniel, one to Calista, and one (from Orra and Edward Hitchcock) to both Nathaniel and Calista. A letter to Nathaniel from Walter Avery furnishes extracts from Massachusetts records, and one to Calista from the Reverend Robert Crawford sends New Years greetings. There is a

summary of the provisions of Nathaniel's will; also included are a number of letters and undated memoranda containing autobiographical and genealogical information.

James Childs Hitchcock, only child of Nathaniel¹⁴ and Calista (Childs) Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on November 28, 1841. As noted above, he served in the Massachusetts Volunteers during the Civil War, was captured, and died in Andersonville prison in 1864. His name appears on the town's Civil War monument.

His papers include a typed copy of an extract from his diary and letters he received while he was in the military service. Of the latter, one is from his aunt, Eunice Hitchcock Huntington, one from her husband, O.E. Huntington of Cleveland, Ohio, and one from the Reverend Robert Crawford, his pastor in Deerfield. There is also a copy of a poem about him, apparently written by Mollie A. Philips of Greenfield, Mass.

Charles Hitchcock,¹² son of Justin⁹ and Mercy (Hoyt) Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on November 3, 1785. In 1821, he married Lois (or Louise) Baker of Conway, Mass.; the couple had two children, both of whom are mentioned below. Charles was a deacon of the Congregational Church of Deerfield. In addition to teaching a singing school, he led the singing in church for many years. He died on January 4, 1864.

The earliest of his papers is a letter he wrote to his family in 1807. There are two deeds to land in Deerfield, formerly owned by Jonathan Hoyt, as well as two letters and an invitation to a New Years Ball that are addressed to him.

Lois (or Louise) Baker Hitchcock, daughter of Isaac and Lois Baker, was born in Conway, Mass., on August 24, 1789 and married Charles Hitchcock¹² on February 22, 1821. She died at the age of 71 on April 28, 1861.

Her papers consist of more than 50 letters, among them letters she received before her marriage from Anna Fisk of Goshen, Mass., from her brother, Charles, while he was a student at Williams College, and later when he wrote from Northfield, Mass. There is also a letter her husband wrote her while she visited her family in Conway and a letter from her sister, Charlotte (Baker) Rice. Most of the material, however, consists of letters she received from her mother.

Lois (Wright) Baker, daughter of Asahel and Lucy (Wait) Bardwell Wright, was born in Deerfield on January 9, 1766. She married Isaac Baker of Conway, Mass., in February 1786; the couple had four children, among them a daughter Lois (or Louise), mentioned above, and a son, Charles, mentioned below. Isaac died in March 1839, and was survived for many years by his widow.

Her papers consist of two letters from her grandson, Isaac B. Smith, and one from [her son-in-law?] Samuel Fay.

Charles Baker, son of Isaac and Lois Baker, was born in Conway, Mass., on June 14, 1798. He attended Williams College and lived in Northfield for a time. He was killed by lightning in Pittsfield, Mass., on May 29, 1829.

There are three letters he received, two while he was a student at Williams College, from his mother and his sister Lois; the third, while he lived in Pittsfield, from his brother-in-law, Charles Hitchcock.

Harriet Hitchcock, daughter of Charles and Lois (Baker) Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on March 27, 1822. After a long period of mental illness, she died in Deerfield, sometime in 1892.

The early items among her papers are four letters she received from her grandmother Baker and from friends. The remainder of the material filed with her papers is addressed to George Sheldon, who was appointed her guardian by the Probate Court of Franklin County. A number of the letters he received were written by Edward Hitchcock, Jr., of Amherst.

Justin Baker Hitchcock¹⁶, son of Charles and Lois Baker Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on November 27, 1824. He was a farmer and lived on ministerial land which he inherited from his father. On December 2, 1858, he married Maria A. Stebbins of Deerfield and the couple had a daughter, Flora.

He is represented by two letters he received from his father in 1850, and a resolution on the death of his father, received in 1864 from his pastor, Robert Crawford. Accompanying his papers is a note addressed to his daughter, Flora, by her grandfather, Charles Hitchcock, in 1862.

Edward Hitchcock,¹³ the youngest child of Justin⁹ and Mercy (Hoyt) Hitchcock, was born in Deerfield on May 24, 1793. As a young man he developed a fondness for natural history and mathematics. He served as Preceptor of Deerfield Academy (1816-1819), and during that time became interested in botany and mineralogy. In 1819, he entered the Yale theological school in New Haven, Connecticut. While there he studied chemistry with Benjamin Silliman, and the two became lifelong friends. Hitchcock served as pastor in Conway, Mass., from 1821 to 1825. In the latter year he began his long service for Amherst College, first as professor of chemistry and natural history (1825-1845), then as president of the college (1845-1854), and finally as professor of geology and natural history. His scholarly accomplishments were recognized by the receipt of honorary degrees from Yale, Harvard, and Middlebury College. Through his efforts, a geological survey of the State of Massachusetts was established in 1830, the first of its kind to be completed in America. He later became state geologist of New York and Vermont. On May 31, 1821, he married Orra White of Amherst, Mass., and the couple had eight children, three of whom are mentioned below. Edward died February 27, 1864.

His papers include a folder of correspondence containing letters he received from his brothers, Henry and Charles, from Solomon Williams, and from Mary Lyon, as well as copies of letters he sent to Benjamin Silliman, President Quincy of Harvard, Reverend Noah Porter, Jr., of Springfield, Mass., and the Rev. Henry John van Lennep. Also included is his appointment as deputy sheriff of Franklin County. [There are three of his commissions as aid-de-camp, dated 1816, 1817, and 1818, among the military materials in Deerfield town papers.] His writings include an address delivered before the Society of Literary Adelpi (Deerfield, 1813); "Theory and Practice of Surveying"; "Calculation of the orbit of the meteor that appeared in Connecticut in 1808"; unbound manuscript sermons mainly delivered in the 1820s; a volume labeled "Manuscript Sermons Preached at Conway, MASS, from 1820 to 1825, by Edward Hitchcock, D.D." (27 sermons, not in numerical order, preached first in Conway and later in other nearby communities); and an incomplete autograph manuscript copy of his play, "Emancipation of Europe or the Downfall of Bonaparte" [received as a gift from Mrs. Mary Williams Fuller].

Orra (White) Hitchcock, probably born in Amherst, was assistant teacher while Edward Hitchcock was a preceptor of Deerfield Academy. She and Edward were married May 31, 1821, and had eight children, two of whom died in infancy. Orra was talented as an artist and drew many of the illustrations for her husband's works. She died less than a year before Edward, on May 26, 1863.

The earliest item in her papers is a photocopy of a brief undated letter she received from Edward Hitchcock before their marriage. There is a letter she received from him from Boston in 1857, and a small commonplace book which she apparently started in 1820.

Mary Hitchcock, daughter of Edward and Orra (White) Hitchcock, was born on July 13, 1824. She attended Mount Holyoke Seminary and is represented in the collection by a letter her father wrote to her in 1842, while she was a student there.

Edward Hitchcock, Jr.¹⁷ oldest son of Edward and Orra (White) Hitchcock, was born in Amherst, Mass., on May 23, 1828, and spent almost his entire life there. He attended Amherst Academy, Williston Seminary, and Amherst College where he graduated in 1849. After completing a medical course at Harvard in 1853, he taught natural sciences and elocution at Williston until 1860. He then studied comparative anatomy in England as the private pupil of Sir Richard Owen. On his return to America in 1861, he became head of the recently organized "Department of Hygiene and Physical Education" at Amherst College and thus became the first professor of physical education at an American college. In November 1853, he married Mary L. Judson; the couple had ten children, one of whom is mentioned below. After a long illness, Edward died on February 15, 1911.

His papers consist of two letters he received from Charles Hitchcock, written at Deerfield in 1859 and 1861, and printed paragraphs with his manuscript signature which he had prepared to thank well-wishers on his 80th birthday (1908).

Mary L. (Judson) Hitchcock, daughter of David and Phebe (Lewis) Judson of Stratford, Connecticut, was born in New York City on January 26, 1831. She married Edward Hitchcock, Jr.¹⁷, in November 1853. With the help of records collected by members of the family, especially her son Edward, and after her personal examination of the records of 38 towns in Massachusetts and Connecticut, she compiled and published *The Genealogy of the Hitchcock Family* in 1894. Mary survived her husband, who died in 1911.

She is represented by only one item, a letter written in Honolulu, Hawaii, by her sister-in-law, Charlotte (Barrows) Hitchcock.

Caroline Judson Hitchcock, daughter of Edward, Jr.¹⁷, and Mary (Judson) Hitchcock, was born in Amherst on September 8, 1857. She shared her mother's interest in family history, as shown by her few papers in this collection. She died, at the age of 73, in 1930.

Her papers consist of a letter received from her father in 1900, from George Sheldon in 1913, and from Frank Boyden in 1922, thanking her for the gift of a letter by her grandfather.

Charles Henry Hitchcock¹⁸, younger son of Edward and Orra (White) Hitchcock, was born in Amherst on August 23, 1836. He graduated from Amherst College in 1856 where he studied theology, but never served as a pastor. He was a lecturer in geology at his alma mater until 1864, and in 1869 became professor of geology and mineralogy at Dartmouth College, also serving as state geologist of New Hampshire. After 40 years at Dartmouth, he retired and took up residence in Honolulu, Hawaii. In 1862, he married Martha Bliss Barrows, whose father was a professor at Andover Academy. They had five children. Martha died in 1892; in September 1894 he married Charlotte Malvina Barrows, a sister of his first wife. Charles died in 1919.

He is represented by a letter he wrote to George Sheldon, noting which publications by his father were lacking from his collection and expressing the wish to obtain printed or typewritten copies of them.

Container List:

- Box 1**
- Folder 1: Papers of John Hitchcock⁴, 1731, 1750 (2 items)
 - Folder 2: Papers of Samuel Hitchcock⁷, 1746-1768 (10 items)
 - Folder 3: Papers of Samuel Hitchcock of Hawley, 1788-1818 (9 items)
 - Folder 4: Papers of Ethan, Erastus, and Eli Hitchcock, 1825, 1848, 1851 (7 items)
 - Folder 5: Papers of Luke⁸ and Lucy (Merrick) Hitchcock, 1777, 1791 (2 items)
 - Folder 6: Papers of Justin Hitchcock⁹, 1766-1823 and n.d. (65 items)
(includes a subscription list for his singing school, 1792)
 - Folder 7: Papers of Justin Hitchcock⁹, 1798 address (1 item)
 - Folder 8: Papers of Justin Hitchcock⁹, Undated (3 items)
 - Folder 9: Papers of Justin Hitchcock⁹, Undated [J.S. Hitchcock copy] (1 item)
 - Folder 10: Papers of Mercy Hoyt Hitchcock, 1815-1816 and n.d. (3 items)
 - Folder 11: Papers of Charissa Hitchcock Swett and her husband,
Jonathan Swett, 1822, 1906 (2 items)
 - Folder 12: Papers of Henry Hitchcock¹¹, 1810-1856 and n.d. (6 items)
 - Folder 13: Papers of Betsey Kimberly Hitchcock, 1854 and n.d. (3 items)
 - Folder 14: Papers of Nathaniel Hitchcock and his wife Calista,
1842-1900 and n.d. (24 items)
 - Folder 15: Papers of James Childs Hitchcock, 1864 (7 items)
- Box 2**
- Folder 1: Papers of Charles Hitchcock¹², 1807-1835 and n.d. (6 items)
 - Folder 2: Papers of Lois Baker Hitchcock, 1815-1841 (52 items)
 - Folder 3: Papers of Lois Baker Hitchcock, undated (29 items)
 - Folder 4: Papers of Lois Wright Baker, 1848-1850 (3 items)
 - Folder 5: Papers of Charles Baker, 1825-1828 (3 items)
 - Folder 6: Papers of Harriet Hitchcock, 1824-1837, 1890-1892 (63 items)
 - Folder 7: Papers of Justin Baker Hitchcock, 1850, 1864 (4 items)
 - Folder 8: Papers of Edward Hitchcock¹³, 1814-1862 (16 items)
 - Folder 9: Papers of Edward Hitchcock¹³, 1813 and n.d. (5 items)
- Box 3**
- Folder 1: Papers of Edward Hitchcock, Sermons (1 vol. and 9 unbound items)
 - Folder 2: Paper of Edward Hitchcock, ms. copy of "Emancipation ..."
 - Folder 3: Papers of Orra White Hitchcock, ca. 1820, 1857 and n.d. (3 items)
 - Folder 4: Paper of Mary Hitchcock, 1842 (1 item)
 - Folder 5: Papers of Edward Hitchcock, Jr.¹⁷, 1859, 1861, 1908 (3 items)
 - Folder 6: Paper of Mary Judson Hitchcock, 1911 (1 item)
 - Folder 7: Papers of Caroline Judson Hitchcock, 1900-1922 (3 items)
 - Folder 8: Paper of Charles Henry Hitchcock¹⁸, 1890 (1 item)
 - Folder 9: Genealogical enquiries, 1869-1915 (32 items)
 - Folder 10: Genealogical enquiries and records, 1951-1979 (9 items)
 - Folder 11: Miscellaneous manuscript and printed material, largely undated (17 items)