

GUIDE TO THE WILSON FAMILY PAPERS

PVMA Library

These papers largely relate to John Wilson (1782-1869) of Deerfield, with additional papers of his father, Samuel Wilson (1748-1815), his nephew, Charles (1826-1863), his wife, Betsy Hoyt Wilson (1783-1860), and his daughter, Mary Hoyt Wilson (1809-1841). The superscript numbers below are based on George Sheldon's genealogical notes in volume 2 of his *History of Deerfield* (1895).

Scope & Content Note:

Samuel Wilson², and his wife, Olive Kendall Wilson, came from Montague, Mass., to the eastern section of the town of Deerfield, known as Great River, in 1794. The couple had six children; two of whom died as infants. Samuel farmed at Great River.

He is represented by legal papers and various receipts.

John Wilson³, Samuel's eldest child, was a farmer and entrepreneur who became involved in town affairs. He served as a selectman, justice of the peace, and overseer of the poor. Locally he was a founding member of the Franklin Agricultural Soc., a steward at Deerfield Academy, notary public, and an assistant US Census marshal. Wilson was arrested in Canada on a charge of spying in 1812 and briefly imprisoned at Montreal and later Quebec. He served in the local militia on his return. In 1816, he began a printing office (now owned by Historic Deerfield) that operated for three years, publishing a number of books, pamphlets, and almanacs. Later in life he became involved in land speculation in Texas, and offered his services in obtaining Civil War pensions. John Wilson married Betsy Hoyt in 1808; the couple had seven children, one of whom is mentioned below.

His papers consist of general correspondence; his petition for obtaining a patent for a new plow; correspondence regarding Texas lands; commissions for various offices; legal documents including deeds, surveys, and a copy of his son John's will; memoranda regarding charges of spying; militia muster roll; a partial gathering of notes regarding trade; 1850 agricultural census; subscription for a pew; *Proposals...for Publishing by Subscription a Digest of the Common Law...* with a three-page list of subscribers; and a drawing of his printing office.

Betsy Hoyt Wilson, daughter of David and Elizabeth Hoyt, was John Wilson's wife.

Her papers consist of a poem and letter from Charissa Swett, two letters from her husband, and a letter from her uncle, Epaphras Hoyt, conveying information about John Wilson's detention in Canada.

Mary Hoyt Wilson, daughter of John and Betsy Hoyt Wilson.

Her papers consist of a letter she wrote, six weeks before her death, to Isabella Williams Bryant, and her diary (with transcription) covering the period Aug. 1826-Feb. 1828.

Charles Wilson, son of Samuel Wilson⁴ and nephew of John Wilson, fought in the Civil War in the 34th Mass. Regt. He died in military hospital in Washington in 1863.

His papers consist of two powers of attorney, both from 1862.

Container List

Box 1

Folder 1	Samuel Wilson ² , legal papers, 1780-1826	(6 items)
Folder 2	Samuel Wilson ² , receipts, 1779-1813	(32 items)
Folder 3	John Wilson ³ , correspondence, 1812-69	(25 items)
Folder 4	John Wilson ³ , correspondence re: Texas lands, 1835-49	(9 items)
Folder 5	John Wilson ³ , petition for patent, 1839 (copies)	(3 items)
Folder 6	John Wilson ³ , petition for patent, 1839 (originals)	(3 items)
Folder 7	John Wilson ³ , legal papers, 1812-66	(44 items)
Folder 8	John Wilson ³ , commissions, 1831-60	(7 items)
Folder 9	John Wilson ³ , memoranda of detainment in Canada	(3 items)
Folder 10	John Wilson ³ , miscellaneous	(5 items)
Folder 11	Betsy Hoyt Wilson, correspondence, 1812-14	(4 items)
Folder 11a	Mary Hoyt Wilson, diary, letter, 1826-28; 1841	(3 items)
Folder 12	Charles Wilson, powers of attorney, 1862	(2 items)
Folder 13	Miscellaneous letters regarding Wilsons; 1850 Deerfield agricultural census taken by John Wilson	(5 items)

See also: John Wilson's diary (1815-60) in Diary Coll.; Papers of Elihu Hoyt (Box 4) for letters from John Wilson