
Hannah Rantoul papers, 1819-1909, bulk 1840-1895

MSS: #007

Processed by: Caitlin Lampman, February - November 2011

Volume: 6 boxes, 3 lin. ft.

Abstract:

The Hannah Rantoul papers measure 3 linear feet and date from 1819-1909. Hannah Rantoul, 1821-1898, was the youngest child of Robert Rantoul and Joanna Lovett Rantoul. The bulk of the papers are letters Hannah received in her lifetime. Also included are items that Hannah collected like newspaper clippings and fliers. Hannah Rantoul was an Associate Manager for the U.S. Sanitary Commission during the Civil War. Records and letters from the work done by Beverly women during the war are included in the papers as well as letters from local soldiers.

Provenance:

The papers were given to the Society in the 1920s by the Endicott family. Hannah Rantoul's papers are part of the larger Robert Rantoul papers collections.

Related Materials:

Robert Rantoul papers

Preferred Citation:

Hannah Rantoul papers, Beverly Historical Society and Museum, Beverly, MA.

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Processor's Note:

Materials were in folders and boxes, but not organized very thoroughly. After taking an inventory of items, letters were divided into family and non-family series. Hannah Rantoul made notes on most letters and envelopes as to the identity of the correspondent, dates, and any additional information she felt needed noting. At some time all letters were removed from their envelopes and placed in separate boxes. Every attempt to reunite letters and envelopes has been made; any unidentifiable envelopes have been placed in separate folders.

Biographical Note:

Hannah Rantoul, 1821-1898, was the youngest child of Robert Rantoul Sr. and Joanna (Lovett) Rantoul. She was born in Beverly, MA and resided in Beverly her entire life in the family home on Washington Street which she inherited at the time of her father's death in 1858. Hannah never married nor had any children. She was an active member in the community, and during the Civil War she served as Associate Manager for the U.S. Sanitary Commission for the city of Beverly. The bulk of Hannah's correspondence is with her family, but there is a good amount from friends as well. The largest grouping of letters is from her friend Anne W. Abbot, the daughter of Beverly minister Abiel Abbot. Abiel Abbot was minister of the First Parish Church from 1803-1828, and Anne and Hannah would have met as young girls. The Abbot family left Beverly for Cambridge after the death of Abiel in 1828, but Anne and Hannah's friendship survived. The earliest dated letter is from 1860 although a great bulk of the letters is undated. There are references to Anne coming to the Rantoul house for tea in other letters dating from the 1830s and 40s.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection is mostly letters Hannah received throughout her life. In a few instances, there are a few draft letters that Hannah wrote to others. The letters begin in 1830 and extend through the 1890's. The bulk of the earlier material includes letters between her immediate family members and her friends from school as well as neighbors. By the 1850s Hannah was receiving letters from a wider range of family relations as well as friends and acquaintances. The bulk of the letters are from family members, Hannah kept close ties with her sibling's children and received letters from them and their spouses and eventually their children throughout her life. A bulk of the materials from the 1880s-1890s are letters from her young grand nieces and nephews. She was affectionately referred to by the family as Aunt Hannah.

Besides her family there is a strong presence of letters from her childhood friends, but as they grew up, married, and left Beverly these letters wane. The largest lot of letters from a non-family member is from Anne W. Abbott, who was the daughter of the Beverly minister Abiel Abbott of the First Parish Church. Most of the letters are undated, but the dated letters start in 1860 and extend until the 1890s.

In addition to the letters Hannah received, the collection includes records of her work during the Civil War. Hannah was an Associate Manager of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. In the collection are records of donations kept by Hannah, printed materials of the national U.S. Sanitary Commission, as well as the letters of receipt of donated goods from the Boston branch of the organization. Also there is an assortment of letters from Beverly soldiers and some war memorabilia such as confederate money.

The last series is a collection of memorabilia and ephemera that Hannah collected. Specifically there are newspaper clippings, booklets of poems, autographs, and pressed flowers.

Series List:

This collection is arranged in 4 series:

Series I. Letters from Relatives, 1828-1909, bulk 1830-1895

Series II. Letters from Non-Relations,

Series III. Civil War Period

Series IV. Miscellaneous memorabilia and ephemera

Content List:**Series I: Letters from Relations, 1828-1909, bulk 1830-1895 (2 boxes, 1 linear foot)****Series Note:**

This series is comprised of letters Hannah received from her family members. Most of the letters discuss the goings-on of the family, visiting, and trips. Some topical folders like the letter of sympathy are included in this series. The letters of sympathy was an existing grouping of letters. It is unclear who grouped them so they have been kept together and most of the letters are from non- relations. The folder of items relating to the death of Robert Rantoul Jr. includes telegrams, copies of resolutions from a town meeting, and a newspaper clipping in tribute to Robert Rantoul, Jr. There is no folder of letters from Robert Rantoul Jr. to Hannah, but a few letters in his wife's folder, Jane E. Rantoul, included letters signed by both Jane and Robert. The last folder in the series, *Items not addressed to Hannah*, are letters to other family members that have ended up in Hannah's papers. Besides the many Endicott letters there is also a few folders of more distant relatives, like Rev. A. P. Peabody and his daughter Mary. Most of the letters from her later years are from her many grand nieces and nephews thanking her for visits and for gifts they received.

Arrangement Note:

Family members have been grouped with each other. Please see attached family trees for relationships.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title	Dates
1	1	Rantoul family letters	1831,1836, 1846, 1848
	2	Charlotte Rantoul	1834-1838
	3	Jane E. (Woodberry) Rantoul	1844-1866
	4	Letters to Jane Rantoul from Hannah Rantoul	1834-1851
	5	Robert S. Rantoul	1846-1865, most undated

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title	Dates
	6	Harriet "Hattie" C. Rantoul	1854-1866, most undated
	7	Maggie and Edith Rantoul	1868-1870
	8	Letters of sympathy for deaths of Rantoul family members	1831-1863
	9	Items relating to death of Robert Rantoul Jr.	1852-1853
	10	Relatives from London, Scotland, and Toronto	1854-1872
	11	William Endicott Jr (1826-1913)	1840-1894
	12	Annie (Thorndike) Endicott (18-- -1)	1857-1868
	13	Clara Thorndike Endicott (1862-1---)	1885-1890
	14	William Endicott 3 rd (1865-	1880-1893
	15	Helen (Shaw) Endicott (1862-	1889-1893
	16	Robert Rantoul Endicott (1833-	1870-1893
	17	Anna W. (Sheldon) Endicott (1845?-	1886-1888
	18	John, Agnes, Margaret, and Joanna Endicott	1888-1895
	19	Charles Endicott	1854-1895
	20	Caroline "Carrie" (Leach) Endicott	1877-1895
2	21	Alice Rantoul Endicott (1861-	1870-1895
	22	Charles A. & Louise Endicott	1891-1895
	23	Caroline Leach Endicott (1867-	1890-1891
	24	Grace E. Endicott	1889-1893
	25	Edith Endicott	1885-1893
	26	Henry Endicott (18-- - 1912)	1860-1895
	27	Mary "Mollie" H. Endicott	1889, undated
	28	Augusta Rantoul Endicott	1889-1891
	29	Henry Endicott Jr.	undated
	30	Thorndike Endicott	1891
	31	Lawrence Endicott	undated
	32	Marion Endicott	1890-1893
	33	Mary E. Endicott	1860-1874
	34	Miscellaneous Endicott Family letters	1846,1889

Box #	Folder#	Folder Title	Dates
	35	Rev. Andrew Preston Peabody (1811-?)	1828-1892
	36	Mary Rantoul Peabody (1840-1913)	1889-1894, most undated
	37	Thorndike Nourse /Beatrice?	1864-1868
	38	Margaret F. Melzeard	1883-1892
	39	Anna L. Thorndike (Cousin)	undated
	40	Miscellaneous Cousins	1840-1892
	41	Miscellaneous Nieces and Nephews	1851-1893
	42	Items and Letters not addressed to Hannah Rantoul	1830-1909

Series II: Letters from Non-Relations, 1819-1895 (2 boxes, 1 linear foot)

Series Note:

This series starts with folders of letters sorted by decade and then extends to folders of letters from particular persons. The letters span Hannah's lifetime, but start with her friends from childhood and then continue onto her adult relationships. The bulk of letters are from Elizabeth (Abbot) Bowditch, Elizabeth (Woodberry) Story, and Anne Wales Abbot. These women were close friends of Hannah's and their letters are the most personal in the collection.

John P. Lyman was not a family member, but did marry Hannah's cousin, Mary Rantoul Peabody (sister of Rev. A. P. Peabody). Letters from the Lyman's have been kept in the non-relations series. Some highlights of this series are letters in referencing the Great Chicago fire of 1870 from Emily Bullard, and Frank and Charles Vaughan's accounts from ship sailing around Samaria.

Box#	Folder#	Folder Title	Dates
3	43	Letters	1819-1840s
	44	Letters	1850s
	45	Letters	1860s
	46	Letters	1870s
	47	Letters	1880s
	48	Letters	1890s
	49	Elizabeth B. (Abbot) Bowditch	1830-1849, 1891
	50	Georgiana (Abbot) Lamson, Martha E. (Abbot) Thorndike, Ellen L. Abbot	1840-1864
	51	Elizabeth "Lizzie" B. (Woodberry) Story	1839-1848

	52	Emily Howe	1836-1850
	53	Mary B. Howe	1851-1870
	54	Sarah H. (Lamson) Howe	1860-1861
	55	Anne Wales Abbot, Dated Letters	1861-1895
4	56	Anne Wales Abbot, Undated Letters	undated
	57	William A. Everett	1869-1894
	58	Emily Everett, Abby Steele, Anna Creelman	1886, 1871, 1890
	59	Annie T. Abbot, Phoebe E. Abbott, and Caroline Abbot	1870-1889
	60	John Pickering Lyman (1807-1874)	1843-1868
	61	Mary Rantoul (Peabody) Lyman (1813-?)	1860-1870
	62	John Pickering Lyman Jr. (1847-1914)	1867, 1888
	63	Mary Jane Andrews, Margaret H. Andrews, H.R. Andrews	1853-1873
	64	Emily R. Bullard	1872-1874
	65	Frank G. Jackson	1888-1894
	66	Adele Kaufman	1877-1878
	67	Charles F. Lee (2 fragile letters)	1870
	68	Augusta B. Thayer	1840-1876
	69	Frank W. Vaughan, Charles Vaughan	1869-1871
	70	Mary S. Wilson	1867-1870
	71	Henry Woods & Annie Woods	1870-1879
	72	Miscellaneous undated letters to Hannah Rantoul	undated

Series III: Civil War Materials, 1861-1870 (1 box, .5 linear feet)

Series Note:

This series begins with letters from local Beverly soldiers. There are letters of thanks for the much needed supplies as well as some reports on the war.

5	73	Francis B. Bernard	1865
	74	Capt. F.E. Porter Coe	1861-1862
	75	Richard C. Dennis	1863
	76	Lieut. William R. Driver	1861-1862
	77	Capt. E. L. Giddings	1862
	78	Austin Glidden	1862-1864

	79	Noah B. Hanson	1863
	80	Richard Pedrick, Jr. & Varnum Pedrick	1865
	81	Capt. J.W. Raymond	1861-1868
	82	John G. Smith	1862
	83	Charles Thomas	1861
	84	Major I.W. Wallis	1862-1863
	85	Miscellaneous letters	1867
	86	Rev. John C. Kimball	1861-1867
	87	Rev. George Trask	1862
	88	Margaret R. Smith	1863
	89	Rev. J.C. Foster	1862
	90	Miscellaneous War Related Materials	1860s
	91	U.S. Sanitary Commission, Organization Materials	1862-1864
	92	U.S. Sanitary Commission Letters	1862-1865
	93	Records of supplies for U.S. Sanitary Commission work from local community kept by Hannah	1861-1865
	94	New England Women's Auxiliary Association, Monthly Reports	1864
	95	The Education Commission, printed materials	1862-1863
	96	Correspondence for aid for War Time Efforts	1862-1865
	97	Confederate Money	1863-1864
	98	Copies of Newspaper Clippings	
	98A	Newspaper Clippings (Do Not Use- See Copies in Folder 97)	1861-1868
	98B	Newspaper Clippings (Do Not Use- See Copies in Folder 97)	1861-1871
	99	Receipts, Bills, Taxes	1863-1870
	100	Miscellaneous Items	1860s

Series IV: **Miscellaneous memorabilia and ephemera**

6	101	Booklets, autographs and poems	1830-1834
	102	Copy book of poems and prose	1837
	103	Composition on American history	1837
	104	Herbarium book of flowers from European trip (on display)	Circa 1870s
	105	Booklet, poem by Lucy Larcom	1886

106	Newspaper clippings kept by Hannah Rantoul	1884-1897
107	Items from the Beverly Historical Society	1890-1897
108	Silver inventories	Circa 1890s
109	Miscellaneous kept by Hannah Rantoul	1852-1893
110	Miscellaneous notes and items	Circa 1850-1890
111	Large envelopes	Circa 1880-1890s
112	Dated and unidentified envelopes	1880s
113	Undated and identified envelopes	undated
114	Undated and unidentified envelopes	undated
115	Envelopes addressed to Warren Prince	1860-1885
116	Miscellaneous unrelated envelopes found in the Hannah Rantoul envelope box	Circa 20 th century
117	Favorite Poems	19 th century