

1712-1999

11 boxes

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Generations of the Bates and Church families based in North Amherst and Ashfield, Massachusetts. Papers include deeds, a will, correspondence, account books (recording day-to-day expenditures on food, clothing, postage, housekeeping supplies, and laborer's wages), diaries, an oral history, photographs, genealogical notes, and memorabilia related to the family.

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## Background on Creator:

Nancy Alden Bassett Guilford, 8th generation descendant of John and Priscilla Alden, lived her entire life in Ashfield, Massachusetts. At the time of her death in 1931, she was the oldest resident of Franklin County at the age of 102. Nancy's brother John died as an infant in 1825 and her other brother William moved to Hammonton, New Jersey and operated a nursery there.

Lucy Guilford Church married George Church. They had two daughters Helen and Isabel and a son Frederick.

George B. Church, a native of Buckland, ran a farm in the Baptist Corner section of Ashfield. He served as President of the Board of Trustees of the Belding Memorial Library from 1918-1930 and was also a Selectman in the town in 1908.

Helen Church was a librarian at the South Ashfield Library. Together with her sister Isabel she took care of her parents, her grandmother Nancy, and her aunt Mary.

Isabel Church was also a librarian at the South Ashfield Library. Together with her sister Helen she took care of her parents, her grandmother Nancy, and her aunt Mary.

Frederick Church grew up on a farm in Ashfield, Massachusetts and graduated from the Massachusetts Agricultural School in June 1902. From 1902-1905 he worked at the School in the Agricultural Department of the Experiment Station conducting experiments dealing with fertilizers. From April 1906-November 1907 he worked as head farmer at the Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York. He left employment there in 1907 due to a change in farm plans made necessary by the taking of land by New York City for an aqueduct. He later worked as a traveling salesman for Lucius Sanderson Fertilizer Company. He was killed in March 1910 in an accident at a train station on Long Island, New York.

Lucia Grover Church was born in Prescott, Massachusetts on December 16, 1877. She worked as a secretary at the Massachusetts Agricultural School from 1897-1904 and then as secretary to the director of the experiment station at the School from 1911 until her death in 1943. She and her three daughters lived at 33 Pine Street in North Amherst.

Cora Grover, sister of Lucia Church, lived with Lucia and her daughters in North Amherst. She was employed as a secretary at the West Experiment Station of the Massachusetts State College from 1913-1957.

Cornelia Church was born on July 21, 1906 in New Paltz, New York, graduated from Amherst High in 1924 and from Massachusetts State College in 1928. She worked at the Worcester Free Library, Greenfield Regional Library, and later was director of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library with an office in Springfield.

Gertrude Church Salter was born in Ashfield on November 12, 1910 and graduated from Amherst High School and Massachusetts State College in 1932. She married Leonard Austin Salter (also class of 1932) on June 23, 1934. Gertrude and Leonard lived in Eaglesville, CT while Leonard taught and pursued his Masters degree at Connecticut Agricultural College. They later lived in Wisconsin when Leonard taught in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Wisconsin. Gertrude, Leonard, and their son Leonard 3rd were killed on June 5, 1946 in the LaSalle Hotel Fire in Chicago.

Marcia Church Bates was born on April 17, 1908. She graduated from Amherst High School and North Adams State College and taught in Sunderland and Buckland before her marriage to Raymond Bates in 1930. She and her husband ran the Bates store on the corner of Meadow and North Pleasant Streets in North Amherst from 1928-1960.

William Luther Bates, father-in-law of Marcia Bates, was a motorman for the Amherst and Springfield Railway and later for the Holyoke Street Railway Company. He and his wife Esther operated the Bates Inn at the corner of North Pleasant and Pine Streets in North Amherst from 1925-1944.

Genealogy Charts of Families attached.

## Scope of collection

The Marcia Church Bates Family Papers, 1712-1999, collected by family members over two centuries, is a collection rich in the local history of North Amherst and Ashfield, Massachusetts.

The Bates family ran two of the businesses in North Amherst: William Bates and his wife Esther operated the Bates Inn from 1925-1944, and Raymond Bates and his wife Marcia operated the Bates Store from 1928-1960. Marcia Bates' letters reveal the difficulties of keeping a business running during the Great Depression and later during the war years of the 1940s. Her letters also indicate some of the daily tasks involved with running the store and the lengths to which she and her husband went in order to maintain financial stability.

The Church family ran a farm in Ashfield, also subject to economic fluctuations. Clearly, the financial constraints that families had to endure during the 1920s-1940s are evident in the materials in this collection. Money is a frequent topic, whether it is discussed in the correspondence, legal documents, account books, or diaries.

This collection also depicts details in the lives of several generations of women, many of whom were college-educated, who worked, lived long and endured family tragedy. In a letter to her aunts, Marcia Bates writes, "Mother rejoices that we were brought up poor and with the knowledge that if we wanted anything done we would have to do it ourselves." Lucia Church, a single mother after her husband Frederick was killed, raised her three daughters in North Amherst and ensured that each of them went to college.

Lucia's daughter Cornelia became a librarian and worked at the Worcester Free Library in Worcester, Massachusetts. Cornelia's letters to her mother often discuss her work at the library. Cornelia's aunts, Helen and Isabel Church, were librarians at the South Ashfield Library, and her grandfather, George, served as President of the Board of Trustees of the Belding Memorial Library from 1918-1930. Therefore, libraries and librarianship are topics of note in this collection.

The local weather is also mentioned frequently. The effects of the March 1936 flood on the local communities are detailed as well as the devastation of the September 1938 Hurricane. In addition, the Church family diaries describe the daily weather conditions in Ashfield.

The collection is organized into seven series, including: I. Correspondence, II. Legal Documents, III. Account Books, IV. Diaries, V. Oral History and genealogical material, VI. Photographs, and VII. Memorabilia.

## Arrangement

This collection is organized into seven series:

Series 1. Correspondence, 1837-1967; n.d.

Series 2. Legal Documents, 1712-1867; n.d.

Series 3. Account Books, 1828-1955

Series 4. Diaries, 1871-1956

Series 5. Oral History and genealogical material, 1999; n.d.

Series 6. Photographs, n.d.

Series 7. Memorabilia, 1849-1967 n.d.

## Series descriptions

Series 1: Correspondence

1837-1967; n.d.

Since most of the correspondents were related by birth or marriage, the letters in this series are often about family members or mutual acquaintances. The letters also often talk about life in Amherst, Ashfield, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

Folder 8 holds letters of reference written for Frederick Church by William Brooks, James Paige, and J.B. Lindsay of the Massachusetts Agricultural School and Albert Smiley of Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York.

Letters to Lucia Church represent a large segment of this series. Most of the letters are from her daughter Cornelia during the years 1932-1937 when Cornelia worked as a librarian at the Worcester Free Library. These letters discuss Cornelia's work at the library and life in Worcester. Many of the other letters sent to Lucia Church are from her husband's family in Ashfield.

Folder 25 contains letters of sympathy written to Gertrude Church Salter's husband's parents upon the death of Gertrude, Leonard, and Leonard 3rd in the LaSalle Hotel Fire in Chicago, in June 1946. The majority of these letters are from Leonard's colleagues at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Minnesota.

This series is arranged alphabetically by recipient of the letters and within each folder the letters are arranged chronologically.

**Series 2: Legal Documents**

1712-1867; n.d.

This series contains deeds, a will, a map and mortgage forms relating to the migration of various members of the Bassett Family from Cape Cod to Ashfield, Massachusetts and the subsequent settlement of different generations of the family in Ashfield.

The folders are arranged alphabetically by subject and material is arranged chronologically within each folder.

**Series 3: Account Books**

1828-1955

The account books record day-to-day expenditures of the various family members. Among the subjects recorded are amounts spent on food, clothing, postage, housekeeping supplies and laborer's wages.

Folder 21 holds an account book kept by George Church of orders from his nursery in Ashfield for the years 1912-1914.

The folders in this series are arranged alphabetically by the name of the individual who kept the account book and chronologically by date.

**Series 4: Diaries**

1871-1956

The majority of these diaries depict details of the lives of the members of the Church Family of Ashfield, Massachusetts. On several occasions, writing in the diary was taken over by another family member if circumstances prevented the diarist from writing. For example, a note on March 12, 1921 in the diary summaries of George and Isabel Church indicates that Isabel takes over the diary from her father. Also, while Isabel is in the hospital in 1936, her sister Helen records entries in her diary. Finally, after Isabel's death in 1951, Helen continues to write in Isabel's 5 year diary of 1848-1952.

Topics covered include the weather, gardening, family news, and letters sent and received.

The diary summaries in this series consist of matters of interest that were copied from George Church's diaries by his daughter Isabel.

This series also contains several diaries of William Luther Bates who was a motorman for the Amherst and Springfield Railway and later for the Holyoke Street Railway Company. His 1913 diary contains timetables for the local schedules that he ran.

Also included is a transcription by Bernice Allen MacDonald of a diary kept by her grandfather Henry Grover (Lucia Church's father) in Montague, Massachusetts in 1873.

The diaries are arranged alphabetically by the name of the diarist and then chronologically by date.

**Series 5: Oral History and genealogical material**

1999; n.d.

An oral history conducted with Marcia Church Bates and family genealogical material make up Series 5. The oral history was conducted in 1999 as part of the Amherst Oral History Project which was sponsored by the Amherst Historical Society. Folder 78 contains an audio tape of the interview along with an information sheet and notes. On the audio tape, Marcia speaks about growing up in Amherst, frequently visiting family in Ashfield, teaching in a one room schoolhouse and running the Bates Store with her husband.

The genealogical material in Folder 79 includes obituary notices of various family members and handwritten family genealogical notes.

**Series 6: Photographs**

n.d.

Series 6, Photographs, is arranged into two folders. Folder 80 includes photographs of various members of the Church family. Photographs of note are: George Church in his peach wagon at the 150th anniversary celebration of Ashfield, Fred Church's high school portrait, Lucia Church in Prescott, and Lucia Church in front of Thompson House on the campus of the Massachusetts Agricultural School. Folder 81 consists of photographs of family members other than the Churches.

**Series 7: Memorabilia**

1849-1967 (*bu/k1905-1967*)

Folder 82 holds miscellaneous memorabilia related to the family, including: a brochure for the Mohonk Mountain House, a leaflet from the dedicatory ceremony at the Belding Library in Ashfield and a reunion notice from Sanderson Academy.

Folder 83 contains memorabilia relating to Massachusetts Agricultural College (later, University of Massachusetts). Included are commencement programs for the Class of 1902 (Frederick Church) and the Class of 1932 (Gertrude Church Salter). The folder also contains a poem which was written (ca. 1948) for the seventieth birthday of Alexander MacKimmie, a professor at the

School and a neighbor of the Churches on Pine Street.

Folder 84 contains writings by various family members. Included in this folder are stories about Prescott, Massachusetts (one of the towns that was taken for the Quabbin Reservoir) and several issues of a fictional newspaper that was created by the Church children.

This series is arranged in folders by type of material and then chronologically by date within folders.

## Inventory

Series 1. Correspondence

1837-1967; n.d.

Bassett, Issac, Letters

n.d.

Box 1: 1

Bassett, Mary, Cards

1906-1948

Box 1: 2

Bassett, Mary, Letters

1873-1930

Box 1: 3

Bassett, Mary, Letters

1931-1948

Box 1: 4

Bassett, Mary, Postcards

1908-1948; n.d.

Box 1: 5

Bates, Marcia Church, Letters

1920-1937; n.d.

Box 1: 6

Church, Cornelia, Letters

1924-1937; n.d.

Box 1: 7

Church, Frederick, Letters

1905-1909

Box 2: 8

Church, George, Letters

1910-1922

Box 2: 9

Church, Helen & Isabel, Letters

1920-1951

Box 2: 10

Church, Lucia, Letters

1913-1929

Box 2: 11

Church, Lucia, Letters

1930-1932

Box 2: 12

Church, Lucia, Letters

1933-1934

Box 2: 13

Church, Lucia, Letters

1935

Box 2: 14

Church, Lucia, Letters

1936-1938; 1942

Box 3: 15

Church, Lucia, Letters

n.d.

Box 3: 16

Grover, Cora Letters

1927-1959

Box 3: 17

Guilford, Nancy, Letters

1880-1930

Box 4: 18

Lilly, Hattie, Letters

1869-1931

Box 4: 19

Lilly, Hattie Postcards

1910-1932; n.d.

Box 4: 20

Miscellaneous family cards

n.d.

Box 4: 21

Miscellaneous family letters

1837-1967; n.d.

Box 4: 22

Miscellaneous family postcards

1906-1959; n.d.

Box 4: 23

Salter, Gertrude Church, Letters

1927-1934; n.d.

Box 4: 24

Salter, Leonard Sr., Letters

1946

Box 4: 25

Series 2: Legal Documents

1712-1867; n.d.

Bassett Family Deeds

1712-1867

Box 4: 26

Guilford, Mary, Will

1916, 1917

Box 4: 27

Map of Dennis, Massachusetts area

n.d.

Box 4: 28

Mortgage forms

1813-1858; n.d.

Box 4: 29

Series 3: Account Books

1828-1955

Bassett, Mary

1937-1949

Box 4: 30

Church, George

1912-1914

Box 4: 31

Church, Helen

1933-1950

Box 4: 32

Church, Helen

1952-1955

Box 4: 33

Church, Isabel & Helen

1931-1948  
Box 5: 34  
Church, Isabel & Helen  
1933-1946  
Box 5: 35  
Lilly, Henry Samuel  
1828-1847  
Box 5: 36  
Shaw, Charles  
1890  
Box 5: 37  
Series 4: Diaries  
1871-1956  
Bates, William Luther  
1906  
Box 5: 38  
Bates, William Luther  
1907  
Box 5: 39  
Bates, William Luther  
1909  
Box 5: 40  
Bates, William Luther  
1910  
Box 5: 41  
Bates, William Luther  
1913  
Box 6: 42  
Church, George  
1871  
Box 6: 43  
Church, George  
1872  
Box 6: 44  
Church, George  
1873  
Box 6: 45  
Church, George  
1885  
Box 6: 46  
Church, George  
1888  
Box 6: 47  
Church, George  
1895  
Box 6: 48  
Church, George  
1902  
Box 7: 49  
Church, George  
1904  
Box 7: 50  
Church, George  
1905  
Box 7: 51  
Church, George  
1908  
Box 7: 52  
Church, George

1909  
Box 7: 53  
Church, George  
1910  
Box 7: 54  
Church, George  
1911  
Box 7: 55  
Church, George & Church, Isabel  
1921  
Box 8: 56  
Church, George, Diary Summaries  
1906-1914  
Box 8: 57  
Church, George & Church, Isabel, Diary Summaries  
1914-1924  
Box 8: 58  
Church, Helen  
1918  
Box 8: 59  
Church, Helen  
1919  
Box 8: 60  
Church, Helen  
1953  
Box 8: 61  
Church, Helen  
1954-1955  
Box 8: 62  
Church, Helen  
1956  
Box 8: 63  
Church, Isabel Diary Summaries  
1926-1931  
Box 8: 64  
Church, Isabel  
1932  
Box 9: 65  
Church, Isabel  
1933  
Box 9: 66  
Church, Isabel  
1934  
Box 9: 67  
Church, Isabel  
1935  
Box 9: 68  
Church, Isabel  
1936  
Box 9: 69  
Church, Isabel  
1937  
Box 9: 70  
Church, Isabel  
1938-1942  
Box 10: 71  
Church, Isabel  
1943-1947  
Box 10: 72

Church, Isabel & Church, Helen  
1948-1952  
Box 10: 73  
Grover, Henry, Diary Transcription  
1873  
Box 11: 74  
Lilly, Hattie  
1919-1922  
Box 11: 75  
Unidentified diary  
1917  
Box 11: 76  
Unidentified diary fragments  
1874, 1877, 1923  
Box 11: 77  
Series 5: Oral History and genealogical material  
1999; n.d.  
Marcia Bates Oral History  
1999  
Box 11: 78  
Genealogical material  
n.d.  
Box 11: 79  
Series 6: Photographs  
n.d.  
Church family photographs  
n.d.  
Box 11: 80  
Other family photographs  
n.d.  
Box 11: 81  
Series 7: Memorabilia  
1849-1967 (*bulk* 1905-1967)  
Miscellaneous memorabilia  
1905-1930; n.d.  
Box 11: 82  
University of Massachusetts related memorabilia  
1906-1966; n.d.  
Box 11: 83  
Writings  
n.d.  
Box 11: 84  
Christian Register (single issue)  
1849  
Box 11: 85

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## **Administrative information**

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Provenance**

Acquired from William and Nancy Bates, 2001

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Sara F. Hagenbuch, 2002.

### **Language:**

English

### **Acknowledgments**

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## Copyright and Use (More information )

*Cite as:* Marcia Grover Church Bates Family Papers (MS 424). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

## Search terms

### Subjects

Ashfield (Mass.)--History--Sources.  
Bates, Marcia Church, 1908-2000.  
Church, Cornelia, 1906-1978--Correspondence.  
Church, Lucia Grover, 1877-1943--Correspondence.  
Farmers--Massachusetts--Ashfield--History--Sources.  
Hotelkeepers--Massachusetts--North Amherst--History--Sources.  
Libraries--Massachusetts--History--Sources.  
Massachusetts Agricultural College--Alumni and alumnae --History--Sources.  
Merchants--Massachusetts--North Amherst--History--Sources.  
North Amherst (Mass.)--History--Sources.  
Prescott (Mass.)--History--Sources.  
Public librarians--Massachusetts--History--Sources.  
Street-railroads--Massachusetts--Employees--History--Sources.  
Weather--Massachusetts--Ashfield.  
Women--Massachusetts--History--Sources.  
Worcester (Mass.)--History--Sources.

### Contributors

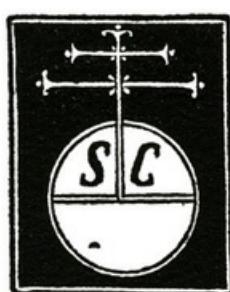
Bates Family [main entry]  
Bates, Marcia Church, 1908-2000.  
Church, Lucia Grover, 1877-1943.  
Church, Cornelia, 1906-1978.  
Church family.

### Genres and formats

Account books.  
Deeds.  
Diaries.  
Genealogies.  
Photographs.  
Wills.

### Link to similar SCUA collections

Family  
Massachusetts (West)  
Oral history



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