

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

Name of collection:

Conant, Edwin, Papers, 1792-1888

Location:

Manuscript boxes "C"
Folio volumes "C"

Size of collection:

2 manuscript boxes; 1 folio volume

N.U.C.M.C. number:

62-3180

RLIN id:

Sources of information on collection:

For a biographical sketch of Edwin Conant, see Charles Nutt, *History of Worcester and Its People*, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1919), IV, 560.

Source of collection:

Gift of Worcester Society of Natural History, 1932

Collection description:

Edwin Conant (1810-1904), son of Jacob (1783-1839) and Relief Burpee Conant, was born in Sterling, Mass. He graduated from Harvard University in 1829. He studied law at the Harvard Law School and also with Rejoice Newton and William Lincoln in Worcester, Mass. In 1833, he moved to Worcester. After approximately ten years of practice, he engaged in business and became prominent in the state militia and held offices in the First Unitarian Church of Worcester. He was generous with his wealth and he bequeathed his mansion at the corner of Harvard and State streets in Worcester to the Natural History Society. He also gave a substantial building to the town of Sterling for a public library and offices for town officials.

This collection of papers consists of material belonging to Jacob Conant as well as his son, Edwin. The material pertaining to Jacob is largely made up of deeds and various legal documents. Most of the deeds concern land transactions in Sterling, Mass. Several transactions in Worcester and other towns in Worcester County are also recorded. Included among the legal documents are: warrants, indentures, bonds, and documents appointing Jacob administrator of estates and Justice of Peace. There are also several insurance policy statements and receipts belonging to Jacob.

The majority of the material in the collection refers to Edwin. Much of the

material is correspondence, including several letters from Harvard classmates, William Sever Lincoln (1811-1889) and other members of the Lincoln family in Worcester. There is also much correspondence concerning legal, business, financial and political matters. There are letters of recommendation, and invitations-refusals, in addition to personal correspondence. There are a few letters and documents concerning Conant's trusteeship of the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester. In the latter half of the 19th century, Conant received several letters from Samuel May (1810-1899) of Leicester, Mass. These letters mostly concern matters involving members of the Harvard Class of 1829. A large portion of the collection contains legal papers. These include: case briefs,

(cont.)

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Collection description (continued):

notes of evidence, affidavits, summonses, indentures, notices, writs, permits and power of attorney documents. There are several documents appointing Conant to terms as a Justice of the Peace for Worcester County. There are also some certificates revealing Conant's involvement in the State militia. The collection also includes numerous deeds of Edwin Conant and others. Most of the deeds refer to land transactions in Worcester. A great number of Edwin Conant receipts are contained in the collection.

There is also a daybook, 1810-1812 and 1833-1840, which records general store sales and farm work in Sterling, Mass., kept by Jacob Conant. The book records settlements reached by Edwin Conant after his father's death in 1839.

See Contents List.

28 February 1975
contents list added 30 April 1991
revised 16 February 2010

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Contents List

Box 1

- Folder 1: Worcester County deeds and other documents, 1792-1829
- Folder 2: Worcester County deeds and other documents, 1830-1853
- Folder 3: Worcester County deeds and other documents, 1833-1862
- Folder 4: Receipted Bills
- Folder 5: Correspondence, 1808-1830
- Folder 6: Correspondence, 1831-1835

Box 2

- Correspondence, 1836-1886
- Folder 1: 1836-1837
- Folder 2: 1838-1839

Folder 3: 1840-1842

Folder 4: 1843-1849

Folder 5: 1850-1863

Folder 6: 1864-1886

Folio Volume Daybook of Jacob Conant, 1810-1812; 1833-1840