

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

Name of collection:

Holden (Mass.), Records, 1744-1893

Location:

Manuscript boxes "H"
Octavo volumes "H"

Size of collection:

2 manuscript boxes; 3 octavo volumes

N.U.C.M.C. #:

RLIN id:

Sources of information on collection:

See Samuel Chenery Damon, *The History of Holden, Mass., 1667-1841* (Worcester: Wallace and Ripley, 1841) and David Foster Estes, *The History of Holden, Mass., 1684-1894* (Worcester: C. F. Lawrence and Company, 1894).

Source of collection:

Papers on the "French Lands," gift of William Lincoln; Damon papers, gift of Samuel Chenery Damon, 1841, with additions and corrections, 1880; Estes papers, gift of David Foster Estes, 1893; papers of the Washington Fusileers, gift of Foster Stearns, 1926; deeds and miscellaneous town records, gift of the Gale Free Library, 1978.

Collection description:

Holden, Worcester County, Massachusetts is located seven miles north north-west of Worcester, Mass. It was settled in 1723 and incorporated in 1741.

Samuel Chenery Damon (1815-1885) was born in Holden, Mass., in 1815 and died in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1885. He was graduated from Amherst College in 1836 and from the Andover Theological Seminary in 1841. In that year, he published his History of Holden, 1667-1841. In 1842, he sailed to Honolulu where he served as minister of the Bethel Union Church until his death. His work there was under the auspices of the American Seamen's Friend Society; in 1843, he began the publication of The Friend, the oldest existing newspaper in the Pacific. His other publications include Morning Star Papers (Honolulu: 1861), Puritan Missions in the Pacific ... (Honolulu: 1866), among others.

David Foster Estes (1851-1926) was born in Auburn, Me., in 1851 and died in Los Angeles, Calif., in 1926. He was graduated from the University of Vermont and from the Newton Theological Institution in 1874. He served as minister in various New England churches, including Holden for the years 1886 to 1891, which he left to assume a position at Colgate University. His History of Holden, 1684-1894 was published in 1894. Other publications include An Outline

of New Testament Theology (New York: [1900]) and Notes on Greek Grammar (Hamilton, N.Y.: 1905).

This collection of papers includes two folders of town records, three folders of papers relating to the "French Lands," deeds to land in Holden, and a record book of the militia unit, the Washington Fusileers. There are also two series of papers from Holden historians Samuel Chenery Damon and David Foster Estes.

The two folders of town records contain tax records, records of the constable,

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Holden (Mass.), Papers, 1744-1893

Collection description (continued):

correspondence of the Rev. Joseph Avery (1751-1824) concerning a dispute over church music, enlistment records, a militia commission, a list of deaths in Holden, 1782-1799, wills and estate settlements, and records of the town surveyor, George Webb (-1825).

The three folders concerning the disputed "French Lands" in Holden refer to property which was sold in 1781 to a Frenchman, Jean Francis Billou (-), to pay state debts. After much negotiation with Billou's heirs, the land was again sold in 1826. These papers, some of which are written in French, include the correspondence and court records which detail that negotiation.

The collection also includes two folders of deeds to land in Holden, 1752-1876.

The papers of Samuel Chenery Damon include two handwritten drafts of his History of Holden ..., as well as a notebook and notes on the history of the town. There is a second notebook containing genealogical notes on the early settlers of Holden. There is also a published copy of his History of Holden ..., with additions and corrections, as well as several pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and photographs.

The papers of David Foster Estes include a folder of correspondence concerning biographical information on Holden residents and correspondence relating to his History of Holden ... There are also notes on the history of Holden, especially concerning military and church history.

Finally, the collection contains a record book, 1830-1836, of the Holden and West Boylston light infantry company called the Washington Fusileers, containing regimental orders, inspections, etc.

See Contents List.

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Holden (Mass.), Papers, 1744-1893

Contents List

Manuscript Box

- 1 Town Records, "French Lands" Papers, and Land Deeds, 1744-1876
 - Folder 1 Town records, 1749-1790, including a list of inhabitants, 1760; enlistment records, 1779; tax records and records of the town treasurer; records of the town constable; wills and estate settlements
 - Folder 2 Town records, 1791-1854, including correspondence of Rev. Joseph Avery concerning a church music controversy, 1790-1794; tax records, 1793; tax record book, 1793; a share of the Massachusetts turnpike, 1801; records of town surveyor, George Webb; militia commission, 1824; notebook listing deaths in Holden, 1782-1799
 - Folder 3 "French Lands" papers, 1781 and 1810-1820, including a plan of land, 1781; court records, correspondence, and legal documents written in French (some with translation)
 - Folder 4 "French Lands" papers, 1821-1822

- Folder 5 "French Lands" papers, 1823-1827
- Folder 6 Deeds to land in Holden, 1752-1815
- Folder 7 Deeds to land in Holden, 1816-1876
- 2 Papers of Samuel Chenery Damon and David Foster Estes, c. 1840-1893
- Folder 1 Two handwritten drafts, c. 1841, of Damon's The History of Holden, Mass., 1667-1841
- Folder 2 Notebook, c. 1841, kept by Damon, with notes on the history of Holden, including a letter written by Andrew Pollard (-) and copies of early Holden documents, 1659-1841
- Folder 3 Notes, c. 1840, by Damon on the history of Holden and a printed covenant of the Holden Congregational Church
- Folder 4 Correspondence, 1882 and 1891-1893, to Estes concerning biographical information about Holden residents and his work on the history of Holden
- Folder 5 Notes, c. 1892, kept by Estes on the history of Holden, especially about residents of the town
- Folder 6 Notes, c. 1892, kept by Estes on the history of Holden, especially about churches, factories, and military history

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Octavo Volume

- 1 Record book, 1830-1836, of the Washington Fusileers, a light infantry company from Holden and West Boylston, Mass., containing regimental orders, assemblies, inspections, etc.
- 2 Notebook, c. 1838, kept by Samuel Chenery Damon concerning early Holden residents and their descendants
- 3 Samuel Chenery Damon's History of Holden, 1667-1841, with additions and corrections, including several printed pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and photographs