

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

Name of collection:

Penmanship Collection, 1762-1856

Location:

Octavo volumes "P"
Oversize mss.
boxes "P"

Size of collection:

23 octavo volumes
1 folder (1 item)

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

RLIN id:

Sources of information on collection:

Source of collection:

Gifts of Mrs. Elizabeth G. May, 1917; Elizabeth Goff Peirce, 1920; Charles H. Taylor, 1926; Eva March Tappan, 1930; Mrs. Edwin I. Comins, 1942; the estate of Russell M. Stobbs, 1976. Some volumes purchased from Benjamin J. Tighe, 1949; Ken Leach, 1985, 1994; Page & Parchment, 1995. Two volumes were transferred from the AAS's Arithmetic Book Collection.

Collection description:

The penmanship collection consists of twenty-three copy books, undated, 1762-1848, representing the work of students from various locations, e.g., Boston, Charlton, Leicester, and Salem, Mass., Brunswick, Me., Eastford, Conn., and New York and Fisher's Island, N.Y. The books, many with illustrated covers, contain examples of penmanship learning methods, including progressions from letters to sentences, practice-copying of verses and essays, plain and ornamental script, "ladies' epistolary writing," and "gentlemen's business hand." Several books also contain examples of paraphs, and others are divided into cypher books with detailed arithmetic and accounting problems.

Represented in the collection are Nathaniel Allen, of Fisher's Island, N.Y.; Andrew Bigelow; Mary Clough; Rubin Comins (1819-), of Charlton, Mass.; James Coombs; Sarah W. Gill, of New York, N.Y.; Benjamin Goddard, Jr.; Simon Ray Greene; Mary Elizabeth Hovey (1829-1892); Lucy Ann Keyes, of Eastford, Conn.; Betsey Ann Lincoln (1817-1904); Rev. Samuel May (1810-1899), of Leicester, Mass.; Josiah B. Peele, of Salem, Mass.; Dan. F. Plummer; S. G. Rea; Rebeckah Salisbury, of Boston, Mass.; Samuel Salisbury (1769-1849); Almyra Sprague; Mary B. Thomas; Almond Tracy (1800-); and Lincoln Varney, of Brunswick, Me.

The oversize folder contains a petition, dated May 1764, of John Vinal (1736-1832), writing-master and usher of the South-Writing School, to the town of Boston, regarding debt incurred while ill with small pox.

30 December 1976
revised 12 September 1977
revised 4 March 2010

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Contents List

Octavo Volume

- 1 Almond Tracy, Writing Book, undated
[purchased from Page & Parchment, 1995]
bound in blue wrapper
- 2 Mary Elizabeth Hovey, Hand-Writing Book, undated
bound in printed wrapper
- 3 Betsey Ann Lincoln, Practical Penmanship, undated
[gift of the estate of Russell M. Stobbs, 1976]
bound in colored, patterned wrapper
- 4 Mary Clough, Copy Book, 1762
[gift of Mrs. Elizabeth Goffe Peirce, 1920]
bound in green wrapper
- 5 Samuel Salisbury, Copy Book, 1780
bound in colored, raised floral patterned wrapper
- 6 Andrew Bigelow, Copy Book, 1785
lacks cover
- 7 Dan. F. Plummer, Copy Book, 1795
[gift of Charles H. Taylor, 1926]
bound in vellum (missing back cover)
- 8 Simon Ray Greene, Copy Book, 1801
bound in plain wrapper
- 9 Josiah B. Peele, of Salem, Mass., Copy Book, 1808
lacks cover

- 10 Josiah B. Peele, of Salem, Mass., Copy Book, 1809
bound in printed wrapper
- 11 Almyra Sprague, Writing Book, 1817
[bequest of Eva March Tappan, 1930]
bound in printed wrapper
- 12 S. G. Rea, Copy Book, 1821
[purchased from Ken Leach, 1985]
bound in printed wrapper
- 13 Sarah W. Gill, of New York, Copy Book, 1826
[purchased from Benjamin J. Tighe, 1949]
bound in printed wrapper
- 14 James Coombs, Copy Book, 1844
[purchased from Benjamin J. Tighe, 1949]
bound in printed wrapper

(cont.)

Penmanship Collection, 1762-1856 Contents List (cont.)

- 15 Lucy Ann Keyes, of Eastford, Conn., Writing Book, 1848
bound in printed wrapper
- 16 Mary B. Thomas, Copy Book, 1856
[purchased from Ken Leach, 1994]
bound in printed wrapper
- 17 Benjamin Goddard, Jr., Copy Book, undated
bound in plain wrapper
- 18 Samuel May, of Leicester, Mass., Copy Book, 1822
[gift of Elizabeth G. May, 1917]
bound in colored, patterned wrapper
- 19 Samuel May, of Leicester, Mass., Copy Book, 1823
[gift of Elizabeth G. May, 1917]
bound in colored, patterned wrapper
- 20 Rubin Comins, of Charlton, Mass., Copy Book, 1833
[gift of Mrs. Edwin I. Comins, 1942]
bound in plain wrapper
- 21 Lincoln Varney, of Brunswick, Me., Cypher Book, 1847
bound in plain wrapper
- 22 Rebeckah Salisbury, of Boston, Mass., Copy Book, 1788
[transferred from Arithmetic Book Collection, 1975]
bound in colored, patterned wrapper

23 Nathaniel Allen, of Fisher's Island, N.Y., Cyphering Book, 1805
[transferred from Arithmetic Book Collection, 1975]
lacks cover