

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Hayden, Sidney, Papers, 1846-1898

LOCATION:

Mss. boxes "H"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

1 manuscript box

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

For biographical data see: Hayden, Jabez Haskell, *Connecticut Line of the Hayden Family*, (Windsor Locks, Ct.: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1888), p. 143-144, 182-184, 293; Albertson, Charles L., *History of Waverly, New York*, (Waverly, N.Y.: Waverly Sun, 1943), p. 224; Orcutt, Samuel, *History of Torrington, Ct. with Genealogies*, (Albany, N.Y.: Munsell, 1878), p. 741.

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Purchased from Craig W. Ross, 1982

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Sidney Hayden (1813-1890), an active Mason and bookseller, was born in Colesbrook, Ct. He married, on 23 March 1836, Florilla E. Miller (1814-ca. 1869) of Torrington, Ct. On 20 March 1840, Hayden, his wife, and their son Julius (1838-) moved to Athens, Pa. There he and his wife had five other children: Algernon Sidney (1843-1843), Albert (1844-), Charles (1846-), Ruth (1848-), and Sidney (1857-). While residing in Athens, Hayden engaged in a variety of activities. He owned and operated a farm during the 1840s and 1850s in order to support his young family. There is evidence that he may have also dabbled in railroads and real estate during this time. As a member and eventual master, 1863, of the Rural Amity Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, No. 70, Hayden was very involved in lodge affairs, attending Grand Lodge encampments and collecting Masonic literature. In the early 1860s, Hayden also began to write pieces for Masonic works. He contributed a sketch to a work entitled Leaflets of Masonic Biography or Sketches of Eminent Free Masons 1862, which was edited and published by Cornelius Moore (1806-), Hayden's close friend and business associate. Soon after his book was published, Hayden began the research for his own work entitled, George Washington and his Masonic Compeers, 1866. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Hayden traveled through the Mid-Atlantic states as a dealer for both the Leaflets and his own Compeers. His trips took him through Ohio, Michigan, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania where he introduced his Masonic works at various lodge meetings. Although these ventures as a bookseller were profitable for Hayden, he often expressed regret over his extensive absences from home. While Hayden traveled, his son Albert kept track of the book sales and also maintained the farm for his father. During the later years of his life, Sidney Hayden retired to his farm in Athens, which was then still managed by Bert, where he died on 4 April 1890.

This collection of papers consists solely of correspondence that has been divided into two areas: the business letters and the family letters. Each is arranged chronologically. Although the business letters were written to Hayden by a variety of associates, the principal correspondent is Cornelius Moore, who was the editor of the Masonic Review. Moore's letters discuss the difficulties he encountered

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (cont.):

throughout the publishing of Leaflets: paper and labor shortages, problems with the binderies, successful advertising strategies, and the lack of reliable agents. Moore's letters also occasionally allude to the progress of Hayden's Compeers. Most of the other business correspondents are Masons whose letters discuss lodge affairs and Masonic publications. However, a few of the letters were written to Hayden by various publishers and bookdealers for whom Hayden was an agent.

The family correspondence consists primarily of letters written between Florilla and Sidney while Sidney was traveling through the Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern states as an agent selling both the Leaflets and later, his own Compeers. Although the family letters date from 1855 to 1898, the majority are concentrated in the 1860s. Hayden's letters to his wife constitute a travel diary of sorts, recording the idiosyncrasies of the people, and the character of various towns and occasionally commenting on various Masons and old friends whom he encountered. His letters also keep careful record of his transactions with customers, publishers, and other agents. Of particular interest is one letter (29 August 1864) written by Hayden following his tour of the Civil War battlefronts where he met General Grant.

Julius Hayden's letters to his parents also discuss matters pertaining to the Civil War. Julius Hayden moved to Alexandria, Va., and then to Atlanta, Ga. (ca. 1864), where he worked as an agent for the Charleston-Memphis Railroad. His letters often refer to the effect of the war upon the operation of the railroad. His later letters (ca. 1869) describe the racial problems that developed during the Reconstruction period. One letter also touches upon his difficulties with servants.

In the 1870s, Charles Hayden moved to Holton, Kan., where he opened a law and real estate office, Hopkins and Hayden, and ran unsuccessfully for public office. Most of his letters, written to his father and his brothers, Bert and Sidney, deal with his business ventures. One letter, which describes an encounter between Charles and a Pottowatomie Indian, provides some illuminating comments on the attitude of settlers toward Indians. Little can be determined about the activities of Hayden's other children from the family letters. However, there is some evidence that Sidney studied law before moving to Leavenworth, Kan., and that Ruth lived in Holton near Charles, where she died ca. 1880.

Interspersed among the letters written between members of the immediate Hayden family are letters from Sidney and Florilla Hayden's brother and sisters. These letters, a kaleidoscope of rural life in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, ca. 1866, and Georgia, ca. 1868, include comments and anecdotes concerning family relationships, the death of a spouse (16 May 1868; 22 November 1872), religion (3 August 1868), sickness (27 October 1866), and occasional references to political events, specifically the Chicago Convention of 1864, the Johnson impeachment, and conflicts between Copperheads and Democrats. Letters written by Florilla's brother, Harry Miller (1807-), while he was working in a hospital at Camp Butler (1862-1864) during the Civil War contain some interesting comments on the casualties, the Black people, and the political aspects of the war. Sidney's brother, Julius Hayden (1811-), also writes an illuminating letter (2 August 1868) on the Reconstruction of the South.

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