

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Taintor-Davis Family Papers, 1763-1917

LOCATION:

Mss. boxes "T"
Octavo vols. "T"
Folio vols. "T"
Oversize mss. boxes "T"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

28 manuscript boxes; 60 octavo volumes; 16 folio volumes

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

See accompanying sheet(s) for additional information.

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Gift of Wendell Davis, Roger Davis, and Merriam Davis, June 7, 1993

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Roger Taintor (1767-1831) and **Solomon Taintor (1769-1827)**, both merchants of Hampton, Conn., were sons of John Taintor (1725-1798) and Sarah Bulkeley Taintor (1735-1806). Roger married **Abigail Bulkeley (1768-1831)** and Solomon married Abigail's sister, **Judith Bulkeley (1775-1849)**. Sometime around 1800 the two brothers and their families began to occupy jointly a house in Hampton. Roger's son, John Adams Taintor, and Solomon's son, Edwin Bulkeley Taintor, were born just a few weeks apart, and both graduated from Yale College in 1821.

Dan Bulkeley (1784-1842), the brother of Abigail and Judith, was one of Roger and Solomon's business partners. He ran a general store in Hampton from about 1817 until his death in 1842. In addition to selling foods in Hampton, Bulkeley exported silk and other Hampton produce to places as far away as New York and Philadelphia. Bulkeley was also the postmaster of Hampton from 1820 to 1836. He married, in 1813, Phoebe Burnett (-1861) of Hampton; they had five children.

John Adams Taintor (1800-1862) lived in Hartford and was a breeder of farm animals. He married, in 1831, Adelia Croade (1804-1881); they had two daughters.

Edwin Bulkeley Taintor (1800-1870) clerked for Roger and Solomon after graduating from Yale. He was elected First Constable and collector of taxes in 1822. In 1823 he removed to West Brookfield, Mass. where he farmed, raised sheep, became a merchant, and was a respected local leader. He married, in June 1826, Sally Penniman (1807-1841) of North Braintree, Massachusetts; they had three daughters. In 1843, he filed for bankruptcy. He married, 12 July 1843, Frances Maria Prichard (1821-1879); they had two daughters.

Solomon's other son, **Henry Griswold Taintor (1813-1889)**, farmed in Hampton and was active in local affairs. He was a Connecticut state representative and state

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (cont.):

senator, and the state treasurer from 1867-1868. He married, in 1839, Delia Williams Ellsworth (1818-1889), a granddaughter of Supreme Court Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth (1745-1807). They had five children: Henry Ellsworth; George Edwin; William Wolcott; Frederick; and Mary Ellen. After the deaths of Henry and Delia in 1889, the house in Hampton was used as a summer residence by their children.

Henry Ellsworth Taintor (1844-1904) attended Yale College until he enlisted in 1864 in the Connecticut Heavy Artillery. After the Civil War, he settled in Hartford and studied law. He became a judge and was a trustee or vice-president of several Hartford banks. He married Jane G. (Jennie) Bennett (-); they had one son.

George Edwin Taintor (1846-1909) also lived in Hartford, where he worked in real estate and was a director of several businesses. He married, 25 October 1870, Emily Strong Davis (1847-), the daughter of Gustavus Fellowes Davis, Jr. (1818-1896); they had one daughter.

William Wolcott Taintor (1851-1924) attended school in Brooklyn and, in 1866, at Hartford High School. He did not choose a professional career or attend college. He was a store clerk in Williamsburg, New York and a commercial traveler in New York City. He removed to Hartford in 1882 where he worked for the Hartford Ice Company. He married, 10 May 1876, Eliza H. Miller (-), a native of New York and daughter of William Miller; they had two daughters.

Frederick Taintor (1855-1934) attended but did not graduate from Yale College. He always maintained an interest in farming and in 1878 decided to go west. He settled on a ranch in the Oklahoma panhandle where he was, for a time, a successful rancher. He married, in 1898, Miss Jessie Cone (-), of Kansas City; they had two sons.

Mary Ellen Taintor (1860-1933) married, 1 October 1884, Frederick Wendell Davis (1855-1917). He was the brother of Emily Davis and the son of Gustavus Fellowes Davis, Jr. They had no children.

Gustavus Fellowes Davis, Jr., the son of Gustavus Fellowes Davis (1797-1836), a Baptist minister, was born in Stonington, Conn. He began working at the Phoenix Bank in Hartford at the age of fifteen. He was president of the City Bank of Hartford for nearly forty years.

This collection spans four generations of the Taintor, Bulkeley, and Davis families of Hampton and Hartford, Conn. Roger and Solomon Taintor's papers reflect the wide range of business activities in which they were engaged. The Taintors bought increasing amounts of land in Hampton and the neighboring towns, from which they farmed, sold wool and produce, operated a store, and loaned money. They were partners, trustees or creditors in other businesses, many with their Taintor and Bulkeley relatives, including Taintors & Bulkeley; Willimantic Cotton Manufacturing Co.; Rufus Pearl & Co.; and Loomises & Barker Gun Co.

The papers of Dan Bulkeley include four boxes of correspondence, some dealing with business matters including buying and selling merchandise and attempting to collect debts. Numerous letters written to Bulkeley in his capacity as postmaster are from persons seeking employment, financial or legal advice, often written by Hampton residents who had moved to New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

The papers of John Adams Taintor include materials relating to his schooling and his

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (cont.):

studies at Yale. These include penmanship exercises, compositions, poetry, and play parts, and correspondence with his parents and friends. There are also some letters and receipts dealing with his trip to Europe in 1828, but relatively little material from the later part of his life.

There is also a small group of business papers of Edwin Bulkeley Taintor.

The papers of Henry Griswold Taintor include school exercises, personal and business correspondence, and documents relating to his activities as a justice of the peace in Hampton. There are many items relating to his personal finances, including three boxes of receipted bills from about 1829 to 1888. These detail purchases of groceries, clothing and other items, subscriptions to periodicals, payment of taxes, and charitable contributions. Also in the collection are a box of cancelled checks and about 25 cashbooks, ledgers, and bankbooks. Henry G. Taintor's wife Delia Ellsworth Taintor carried on an extensive personal correspondence, and there are about 4 boxes of letters addressed to her written by more than 75 individuals. Also included is a recipe book that she compiled. The collection contains a small quantity of papers of Henry Ellsworth Taintor including school exercise books and correspondence.

There are four folders of business papers and correspondence of George Edwin Taintor, and four folders of the correspondence of his wife Emily Davis Taintor.

There are two folders containing materials concerning William Wolcott Taintor including school exercises and letters from Delia Ellsworth Taintor.

Also included in the collection are four folders of materials concerning Frederick Taintor including school exercises and correspondence.

There are also two boxes of letters written to Henry and George's sister Mary Ellen Taintor after the death of her husband Frederick W. Davis in 1917. The collection also includes three octavo volumes belonging to Frederick W. Davis.

The collection includes Gustavus Fellowes Davis, Jr.'s business papers and correspondence, as well as receipted bills and about thirty volumes of cash accounts, bankbooks, etc.

Miscellaneous items in the collection include two volumes of "Exposition of Psalms" written by G.F. Davis's father Rev. Gustavus Fellowes Davis in 1829 and 1830, and a small group of accounts of sales of religious tracts written by Rev. Davis. There is a journal, 1788-1791 for an unidentified business in Boston supplying goods for ships, possibly from the Davis family. There are also several account books of businesses in which the family probably had an interest, including an account book of Charles Chandler Button (1788-1877) in Hampton, 1837-ca. 1855; two unidentified ledgers, 1828-1837 and 1846-1848; and a journal of the Liebig Manufacturing Co. of East Hartford, 1852-1856, manufacturers of poudrette (fertilizer). This volume also contains box scores of six baseball games played by the Nabobs of East Hartford in 1871.

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (cont.):

Scattered through the collection are notes about individual items made by James O. Robertson and Janet C. Robertson, who bought the Taintor-Davis house in Hampton in 1965. The collection was mostly organized in its present form by the Robertsons in preparation for their book All our Yesterdays: A Century of Family Life in an American Small Town (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

See Contents List.

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Additional Information

Sources of information on collection:

Robertson, James O., and Janet C. Robertson, *All Our Yesterdays: a Century of Family Life in an American Small Town* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

Commemorative Biographical Record of Hartford County, Connecticut (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1901) 1415-1418.

Jacobus, Donald Lines, *The Bulkeley Genealogy: Rev. Peter Bulkeley* (New Haven: s.n., 1933) 291-292, 720-721, 728.

Lincoln, Allen B., ed., *A Modern History of Windham County, Connecticut* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke) 342-359.

Meet Your Neighbors: New England Portraits, Painters, and Society, 1790-1850 (Sturbridge: Old Sturbridge Village, 1992).

American Antiquarian Society
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT

TAINTOR-DAVIS FAMILY, PAPERS, 1763-1917
CONTENTS LIST

Manuscript Box

- 1 Notes on collection [2 folders]
Roger Taintor (1767-1831): correspondence and business papers, including letters from John A. Taintor, 1817-ca. 1830; also documents re: estate of John Fuller [30 folders]
Solomon Taintor (1769-1827): business papers, including inventory of estate, 1827 [3 folders]
Roger and Solomon Taintor: deeds and business papers (A-Chaplin) [20 folders]
- 2 Roger and Solomon Taintor: deeds and business papers (Chapman-Young) [63 folders]
Taintors and Bulkeley: deeds and business papers [20 folders]
- 3 Willimantic Cotton Manufacturing Co., Roger Taintor, Trustee, 1822-1825 [4 folders]
Rufus Pearl & Co.: accounts with Roger and Solomon Taintor, 1816-1825 [16 folders]
Loomises & Barker Gun Co.: accounts with Roger and Solomon Taintor, 1814-1818 [1 folder]
John Adams Taintor (1800-1862): school papers, 1814-1821 [14 folders]
- 4 John Adams Taintor: miscellaneous papers, 1820s; correspondence (Allen-Worthington) [63 folders]
- 5 Edwin Bulkeley Taintor (1800-1870): business papers [36 folders]
Henry Griswold Taintor (1813-1889): miscellaneous papers (school, business, financial) [22 folders]
- 6 Henry Griswold Taintor: business papers and correspondence (Ashley-Smith) [76 folders]
- 7 Henry Griswold Taintor: business papers and correspondence (Soule-Wait) [17 folders]; Justice of the Peace papers, Hampton, Conn. (Anthony-Wyllys) [64 folders]
- 8 Dan Bulkeley (1784-1842): correspondence (mostly retail, silk, and postmaster business) (Allen-Dorrance) [64 folders]
- 9 Dan Bulkeley: correspondence (Du Bouchet-Manning) [75 folders]

Manuscript Box

- 10 Dan Bulkeley: correspondence (Manning-Staples) [50 folders]

- 11 Dan Bulkeley: correspondence (Starr-Wright) [42 folders]; accounts and receipts [6 folders]
- 12 Dan Bulkeley: business papers and miscellany [11 folders]
Delia Ellsworth Taintor (1818-1889): miscellaneous papers, including recipe book [11 folders]; correspondence (mostly personal) (Bennett-Clapp) [16 folders]
- 13 Delia Ellsworth Taintor: correspondence (Clapp-Hall) [31 folders]
- 14 Delia Ellsworth Taintor: correspondence (Harriet-Taintor, George) [21 folders]
- 15 Delia Ellsworth Taintor: correspondence (Taintor, Henry-Taintor, Mary) [12 folders]
- 16 Delia Ellsworth Taintor: correspondence (Taintor, William W.-Windsor, Conn. [9 folders]
Henry Ellsworth Taintor (1844-1904): school exercises; correspondence (business and personal) (Clapp-Otis Brothers) [14 folders]
- 17 Henry Ellsworth Taintor: correspondence (Porter-Wyckoff) [7 folders]
Mary Taintor Davis (1860-1933): correspondence and inventory of Maple Terrace [15 folders]
- 18 Henry Griswold Taintor (1813-1889): receipted bills, ca. 1829-1850s [32 folders]
- 19 Henry Griswold Taintor: receipted bills, n.d.; 1853-1877 [29 folders]
- 20 Henry Griswold Taintor: receipted bills, 1878-1888 [20 folders]
- 21 Henry Griswold Taintor: cancelled checks, 1874-1881 [20 folders]
- 22 George Edwin Taintor (1846-1909): business papers and correspondence [4 folders]
Emily Davis Taintor (1847-): correspondence [4 folders]
William Wolcott Taintor (1851-1924): school exercises and letters from Delia Ellsworth Taintor [2 folders]

Manuscript Box

- 22 Frederick Taintor (1855-1934): school exercises and correspondence [4 folders]
- 23 Taintor and Davis families: miscellaneous papers [10 folders]
Gustavus Fellowes Davis (1818-1896): miscellaneous papers; business papers and correspondence (Ayres-Groton) [20 folders]
- 24 Gustavus Fellowes Davis: business papers and correspondence (Heard-Warner) (including estate of Mary Pierce) [21 folders]
- 25 Gustavus Fellowes Davis: receipted bills, 1884-1888 [24 folders]
- 26 Gustavus Fellowes Davis: receipted bills, 1889-1891 [15 folders]

- 27 Mary Ellen Taintor Davis (1860-1933): letters of condolences received after the death of Frederick Wendell Davis (1855-1917), 1917 (miscellaneous; Allen-Lounsbury) [10 folders]
- 28 Mary Ellen Taintor Davis: letters of condolences received after the death of Frederick Wendell Davis, 1917 (McCook-Wycoff) [8 folders]

Octavo Volume

Henry Griswold Taintor

- 1-16 Cash books, 1844-1887
 17 Waste book, 1850-1853
 18-23 Bank books, 1871-1888 (vol. 20 also contains Sabbath School penny contributions, 1881-1886)

Gustavus Fellowes Davis

- 24-37 Expense accounts (mostly in pocket diaries), 1851-1859; 1862-1866
 38-45 Expense and cash accounts. 1867-1891
 46-47 Family expenses, 1848-1852, 1856-1859
 48 Account with City Bank, Hartford, Conn., 1859-1862
 49 Family expenses with Phoenix Branch Bank, Hartford, Conn., 1865-1868, and account with Mary Pierce, 1845-1850
 50 "Subscription for the benefit of Yellow Fever Sufferers," Hartford, Conn., ca. 1878
 51 Subscription for the First Baptist Church, Hartford, Conn., 1863
 52 First National Bank, Hartford, Conn.; bills payable in account with Sanders, Tracy and Clark; Nissinger and Wright, etc., 1870-1876
 53 City National Bank, Hartford, Conn.: Moody and Sanky fund, 1877-1878

Octavo Volume

Gustavus Fellowes Davis

- 54 Subscription for Connecticut Literary Institution Building, Hartford, Conn., 1874
 55 Wallet (empty)
 61 Account book, 1840-1849, with inventories of personal property, 1843-1856

Frederick Wendell Davis

- 56 Bank book, City National Bank, Hartford, Conn., 1885-1887
 57 Bank book, City National Bank, Hartford, Conn., 1887-1890
 58 Account with Hills & Co., grocers, Hartford, Conn., 1891

Edwin Buckeley Taintor

- 59 Chemistry lecture notes, Yale (?) ca. 1820? in autograph book for Yale class of 1821 (autographs clipped out)

John Adams Taintor

- 60 Business cards, etc.; many from European trip, 1820s

Folio Volume

Roger Taintor

- 1 Waste book (merchandise and labor), Hampton, Conn., 1827 December-1830 December

John Adams Taintor
1 Waste book (merchandise and labor), Hampton, Conn., 1830 December-1833
December

Henry Griswold Taintor
2 Waste book, Hampton, Conn., 1833 August-1847 March;
Ledger (merchandise and labor), 1837-1844
3 Waste book, Hampton, Conn., 1847 April-1868 February
Ledger and miscellaneous accounts, 1859-1867

Rathbun and Taintor
4 "Blotter" (dry goods), Hartford, Conn., 1875 December-1876 June

Rev. Gustavus Fellowes Davis
5 Sales of religious tracts, 1832-1833
Account with Gustavus Fellowes Davis, Jr., 1832-1836
11 Exposition of Psalms 1-30, 1829
12 Exposition of Psalms 31-61, 1830

Folio Volume

Gustavus Fellowes Davis
6 Day book, 1849 May-1861
Cash accounts and miscellaneous accounts, 1849-1874
7 Pierce family stocks, 1849-1862
Personal inventories, 1857-1874
8 Hartford County Savings Institution (records of dividends), 1858-1865
9 Notes protested as Notary Public, 1863-1872
10 Check book (includes information on division of Davis' estate), 1896-1898

Henry Martin
12 Poetry, etc., 1866-1869

Charles C. Button
13 Ledger, Hampton, Conn., 1837-ca. 1855

Liebig Manufacturing Co., East Hartford, Conn.
16 Journal (wages paid and sales of pourette (e.g., fertilizer), 1852 October-1856
February
--volume also contains box scores of six baseball games played by the Nabobs, East
Hartford, Conn., 1871

Unidentified
11 Journal, Boston, Mass., 1763 April-1780 December
Ledger, 1788-1791
--ships' supplies (possibly kept by an ancestor of Gustavus Fellowes Davis)
14 Ledger (general merchandise), "#6," ca. 1828-1837
15 Ledger (investments and unspecified merchandise), 1846-1848