

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

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**NAME OF COLLECTION:**

Woods, George Bryant, Papers, 1801-1915

**LOCATION:**

Mss. boxes "W"  
Oversize mss. boxes "W"

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**SIZE OF COLLECTION:**

2 manuscript boxes; 1 oversize folder (15 items)

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**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:**

For a biography of Woods, see Henry A. Clapp, ed., *Essays, Sketches, and Stories ... of George Bryant Woods* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1873), p. viii-xix.

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**SOURCE OF COLLECTION:**

Gift by Mrs. Roger W. Frost, 1981

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**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:**

George Bryant Woods (1844-1871), a native of Barre, Mass., was the son of Edwin Woods (1819- ), trial justice in criminal cases for Worcester County. George Woods was a journalist/editor for the Barre Gazette, Worcester Evening Transcript, Boston Saturday Evening Gazette, and the Boston Daily Advertiser, as well as numerous other newspapers and periodicals. He served for six months as a private in the 8<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Battery during the Civil War and was Washington correspondent for the Advertiser during the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson. In 1865 he married Emma Louise Miriam Adams (1839- ) of North Brookfield, Mass., and had two sons, Walter Bryant Woods (1868-1869) and George Adams Woods (1869- ). George Bryant Woods died of consumption in Boston at the age of twenty-seven.

This collection consists of correspondence, poetry, drawings, newsclippings, bills, receipts, and legal documents, for the period 1801 to 1915. There are early letters, 1801 to 1815, of members of the Deland family of North Brookfield (ancestors of Emma Adams), but the bulk of the correspondence was generated by George Bryant Woods to members of his family and by his uncle, Samuel Fay Woods (1837- ) to George. The Civil War letters of George B. Woods were written mainly to his fiancé, Emma Adams, and concern camp life, long marches, and poor supplies. The Civil War letters to his uncle, a lieutenant in the Massachusetts 34<sup>th</sup>, provide more detailed information concerning the social and political scene in Worcester, Mass., Annapolis, Md., Washington, D.C., and Virginia, as well as marches, skirmishes, troop movements, and Samuel Woods' opinions of various military leaders.

George B. Woods had entered the field of journalism at the age of fourteen as a contributor. His letters relate to his brief but highly regarded career as a journalist, working largely in Boston, and Washington, D.C. He and his wife were stationed in Washington during the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), and he wrote also of his editorial work with the Saturday Evening Gazette, including his difficulties with its publisher, Penfield Beach Goodsell (1796-1873). There are also a few letters from readers concerning his reviews of dramatic productions and letters from various editors in New York, Boston, Cincinnati, and Chicago relating to his contributions. In Washington, D.C., he worked with and became a friend of Sidney Andrews (1835-1880), journalist and author, and while near death he received

a letter from another colleague, Whitelaw Reid (1837-1912), editor of the New York Tribune.

Many letters were written to Woods' parents in Barre, where George and Emma Woods spent their summers, and to his brother, Joseph Edwin Woods (1847- ), who worked for a railroad company in Boston and married his brother's widow in 1874. There are details of the Woods' domestic and social life in Boston and baseball games in Barre, as well as comments on national politics. He wrote of his coverage of the Chicago Republican Convention of 1868 and received two letters, 1866 and 1868, from John Thomson Ford (1829-1894), owner of Ford's Theatre in Washington, requesting Woods' editorial support of Edward Spangler ( - ), accused in the Lincoln assassination conspiracy. Woods traveled to South Carolina in 1870 in an effort to restore his health and wrote of the scenery and people there.

The collections also contains Woods family poetry; bills and receipts for rent, furniture, taxes, etc.; and drawings and sketches. Other miscellaneous items include a memoir of a dream, 1809?; a memorandum list of books, 1861; list of men "... mustered into the service of the United States ... Camp Stevens, Groton Junction, Oct 17, 1862"; prescription for glasses, 190?; genealogical material concerning the Woods and Deland families; a wedding invitation; a list of Massachusetts counties and the number of justices in each; and a list of members of an acting troupe.

There is a folder of newspaper clippings and a rough draft of an article, as well as a small bundle of envelopes.

The oversize folder contains commissions appointing Edwin Woods as a trial judge, 1850 to 1876; several papers, 1915, of Joseph Edwin Woods concerning this collection; and an inventory of property loaned to Rebeckah Delan by her father, Amos Adams, dated 5 April 1821.

See Contents List.

26 April 1982  
revised 5 March 2010

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George Bryant Woods, Papers, 1801-1915

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- 18      Miscellaneous items, 1809 - 190?; n.d.
- 19      Newspapers articles; Envelopes