

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

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**NAME OF COLLECTION:**

Cooper, James Fenimore, Papers, 1792-1884

**LOCATION:**

Mss. boxes "C"  
Oversize mss. boxes "C"

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**SIZE OF COLLECTION:**

7 manuscript boxes; 1 oversize manuscript box

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**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:**

*The Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*, ed. by James Franklin Beard. 6 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960-1968).

Robert E. Spiller and Philip C. Blackburn. *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Writings of James Fenimore Cooper*. (New York: Bowker, 1934)

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**SOURCE OF COLLECTION:**

One letter, dated 25<sup>?</sup> February 1832 to Armand Carrel, was purchased from George S. MacManus Co., 1983. Two letters, dated 22 May 1826 and 7 July 1827, was purchased from Ximenes Books, 1986. One letter, bound into *The Deerslayer*, was purchased from Argonaut Books, 1987. The remainder of the collection was the gift of the Paul Fenimore Cooper, Jr. estate, 1990.

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**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:**

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), the son of William Cooper (1754-1809) and Elizabeth Fenimore Cooper (1752-1817), was born in Burlington, N.J., but spent his youth at Otsego Hall in Cooperstown, N.Y., the home of his father. After an early education at the public school in Cooperstown and at the home of an Episcopal rector in Albany, he attended Yale University for three years. In 1806 he went to sea, receiving a commission as a navy midshipman in 1808. His marriage to Susan Augusta De Lancy (1792-1852) of Westchester County, N.Y., took place in 1811, when he also resigned from the navy. In the years immediately following their marriage, the Coopers lived in Mamaroneck, Cooperstown, Scarsdale (where he began writing), and New York, N.Y. Cooper's first novel, Precaution (1820), was not a success, but this was followed by The Spy (1821), The Pioneers (1823), and The Pilot (1823), all of which were very successful.

Cooper met the Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834) in 1824, and the two became friends. In 1826 Cooper and his family moved to Europe, living mostly in Paris. They returned to New York City in 1834, and lived there for two years before settling at Otsego Hall in 1836.

Cooper was a prolific writer, and in the course of his life he became involved in a number of controversies, both literary and personal. He was attacked by the newspapers, and initiated and won several lawsuits for libel. Many of the papers in the present collection deal with these court cases (see Ethel R. Outland, The "Effingham" Libels on Cooper: a Documentary History of the Libel Suits of James Fenimore Cooper Centering Around the Three Mile Point Controversy and the Novel Home as Found, 1837-1845 [Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1929. University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, No. 28]).

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**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (cont.):**

Cooper's later works included the "Littlepage" trilogy—Satanstoe (1845), The Chainbearer (1845), and The Redskin (1846). These novels reflected his sympathies with landowners against tenants in the anti-rent controversy that took place in New York in the 1840s.

The present collection consists of many of Cooper's own papers, along with some papers of other family members that were in the possession of Cooper's great-grandson, Paul Fenimore Cooper, Jr. It contains a number of manuscripts of Cooper's works, including four of his novels (Red Rover, The Bravo, Satanstoe, and The Chainbearer), along with fragments of other works. The papers also include extensive correspondence, notably with Cooper's American publisher, Carey and Lea, and with members of the Cooper and De Lancy families. There are many letters written by Cooper to Commodore William Branford Shubrick (1790-1874). Also in this collection are business papers and ledgers, copies of contracts, deeds, and indentures.

See Contents List (which includes an itemized list of the correspondence).

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

James Fenimore Cooper, Papers, 1792-1884

Contents List

Manuscript Box

- 1     Cooper's Writings, n.d.; 1820-1849
- Folder 1     Copyright Certificate for *Precaution*; 1820 (photocopy)  
Articles of agreement between JFC and Carey and Lea for *The Prairie*;  
1826
- Folder 1A    Review of *The Pilot* (in JFC hand); 5 pp.; c. 1823
- Folder 2     *The Prairie*; author's ms. of "Preface"; author's corrected copy of  
proof sheets of pp. 265-277; 1827
- Folder 3     *Red Rover*; author's ms.; c. 58 leaves; plus 109 pages in Wm. Cooper's  
hand (lacks c. 7 leaves); 1827
- Folder 4     Draft intended for publication in Edinburgh Review (Cooper expresses  
anger with their treatment of his book *Notions of Americans*);  
fragment (the rest at Yale); 1828/9?
- Folder 5     *The Bravo*; author's ms.; 60 leaves (both sides); c. 1829
- Folder 6     Travel journal, Paris, 9/19-23/1830; 3 leaves
- Folder 7     *The Water-Witch*; ms. fragment; 2 leaves pasted together (both sides);  
c. 1830
- Folder 8     Letter Armand Carrell [2/25?/1832] to be published in Le National;  
author's ms.
- Folder 8A    *The Headsman*; author's ms.; 2 leaves (both sides); 1833
- Folder 9     *Monikins*; ms. fragment; 5 leaves (both sides); c. 1835
- Folder 10    Gleanings in Europe; ms. fragment; 1 leaf (1 side); (published  
Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1837; the fragment is from  
vol. 2, p. 119-123)  
Unidentified author's ms.; 1 leaf
- Folder 11    "On the Distinctions between the English and American Politics";  
author's ms.; article intended for Democratic Review, 10 pp.; c.  
1837-1840
- Folder 12    Author's ms. about the "Effingham" libel suit; 2 leaves (both sides);  
c. 1837-1845
- Folder 12A   Articles of agreement between JFC and Lea and Blanchard for *The Naval  
History of the United States*; 1838
- Folder 13    "Abuse of Liberty of the Press"; author's ms.  
"Preface" to second edition of *Naval History*  
Information on the U.S.S. Surprize  
Miscellaneous mss. in JFC's and other hands; c. 1839?
- Folder 14    *Satanstoe*; author's ms.; 129 leaves (1 side); c. 1843-1845
- Folder 15-    *The Chainbearer*; author's ms.; Chapters I-XXX, 6 folders; c. 1845  
20     Two copies of proof sheet of title page (N.Y.: Burgess, Stringer &  
Co., 1845)

(cont.)

- Folder 21 "Lies"; author's ms.; about Tiffany case. 1 leaf (1 side); n.d.
- Folder 22 *Jack Tier*; author's ms.; pp. 1-6, 17-30; c. 1848
- Folder 23 *Oak Openings*; author's ms.; fragment, 3 leaves (1 side); numbered 71, 75, and 76 (respectively); c. 1848
- Folder 23A *The Sea Lions*; author's ms.; fragment, 1 leaf (1 side); 1849
- Folder 24 Author's ms. about French law and customs; 4 leaves; n.d.
- Folder 25 Unidentified fragment of author's ms.; "Chapter VI"; ½ leaf (1 side); n.d.  
"To the American People"; author's ms.; 3 leaves (1 side); n.d.  
Unidentified fragment of author's ms.; pp. 37, 40; n.d.  
Author's mss. of two poems; 2 leaves (1 side); n.d.
- Folder 26 Author's ms. about Hamilton, Arnold, etc.; 2 leaves (2 pp.); n.d.
- Folder 27 Author's ms.; unidentified dialogue or play; 2 leaves (2 pp.); n.d.
- Folder 28 Author's unidentified ms. notes; 1 leaf (1 side); n.d.
- Folder 29 Author's mss. about naval history and biography of Barney; 25 various pp.; n.d.
- Folder 30 Miscellaneous author's mss.: letters to editors, unidentified letters about *Naval History*; unidentified fragments
- Folder 30A Ms. leaf; naval episode; n.d.
- Folder 30B Family record and Otsego Hall record; 1833 and 1840
- Folder 31 Copy of Yale Literary Magazine, 5.5 (March 1840) containing article on JFC with his own marginal notes

2 Correspondence, n.d.; 1801-1834; 1848-1851

- Folder 1 Copies of correspondence, 1848-1851 (see itemized list below)
- Folder 2 Undated or illegible
- Folder 3 1801; 1808; 1810-1811; 1813-1815
- Folder 4 1816-1817
- Folder 5 1818
- Folder 6 1819
- Folder 7 1820-1821
- Folder 8 1822
- Folder 9 1823-1824
- Folder 10 1825
- Folder 11 1826, January - March
- Folder 12 1826, April - December
- Folder 13 1827, January - July 2
- Folder 14 1827, July 7

(cont.)

Folder 15 1827 July 23 - November  
Folder 16 1828  
Folder 17 1829-1830  
Folder 18 1831  
Folder 19 1832, January - July  
Folder 20 1832, August - December  
Folder 21 1833  
Folder 22 1834

3 Correspondence, 1835-1929 and Miscellaneous Items, n.d.; 1822-1851

Folder 1 1835  
Folder 2 1836  
Folder 3 1837  
Folder 4 1838  
Folder 5 1839, January - June  
Folder 6 1839, July - December  
Folder 7 1840  
Folder 8 1841, January - June  
Folder 9 1841, July - 1842  
Folder 10 1843, January - February  
Folder 11 1843, March - May  
Folder 12 1843, June - August  
Folder 13 1843, September - October  
Folder 14 1843, November - December  
Folder 15 1844  
Folder 16 1845, January - July  
Folder 17 1845, August - December  
Folder 18 1846-1847  
Folder 19 1848  
Folder 20 1849  
Folder 21 1850, January - May  
Folder 22 1850, June - December  
Folder 23 1851; 1854; 1860; 1868; 1872; 1874-1875; 1884; 1929  
Folder 24 Alphabetical list of names; unspecified purpose; n.d.

(cont.)

- Folder 25 Miscellaneous items:  
 11 empty envelopes  
 Calling card for Robert McCall  
 Extracts from minutes of New-York Historical Society, 10/7/1851  
 2 locks of JFC's hair  
 Decorative title page of *The Spy*, Phila.: Harrison Hall, 1822  
 Autographed (?) engraving of JFC—"The Author of 'The Spy'" London:  
 Published in The New Monthly Magazine by Colburn & Bentley, 1  
 April 1831  
 Autographed engraving of JFC—Engraved by J. C. Buttre. From a  
 daguerreotype by Brady, 1 September 1850, in the possession of  
 Mrs. H. F. Phinney  
 Portion of ms. periodical, The Hartwick Spy, vol. 1, no. 5,  
 printed by Henry Sly 4<sup>th</sup> at Goblins Village; 1831 (?)  
 Unsigned, undated note concerning JFC and Washington Irving
- Folder 26 Impression of JFC's seal; also negative of this seal
- Folder 27 Copy of Southern Literary Messenger, v. 4, no. 6 (June 1838) with  
 JFC's signature
- Folder 28 Copy of "The Lumley Autograph" by Susan Augusta Cooper begun in the  
 January 1851 issue of Graham's Magazine and concluded in the  
 February 1851 issue

#### 4 Business Papers, n.d.; 1803-1851

- Folder 1 Listing of miscellaneous JFC Business Papers (bound in packets)  
 prepared by Paul F. Cooper; packets disassembled
- Folder 1A Orders (Navy); 1808
- Folder 1B Receipts (Navy); 1810
- Folder 1C 3 promissory notes; 1808
- Folder 2 Checks drawn on account at Bank of NY; 1817-1818  
 Bank book, Bank of NY; 1817-1819
- Folder 3 Checks drawn on account at Bank of NY; 1819
- Folder 4 Checks drawn on account at Bank of NY; 1834-1835  
 Promissory note to Otsego County Bank; 1849  
 Promissory note to Bank of NY; 1851
- Folder 5 Checks drawn on account at Otsego County Bank; 1833-1834; 1837; 1848;  
 1849; 1850; 1851
- Folder 6 Receipted bills; 1803; 1808-1814
- Folder 7 Receipted bills; 1815-1818
- Folder 8 Receipted bills; 1819-1849
- Folder 9 Foreign bills; n.d.
- Folder 10 Foreign bills; 1826-1829
- Folder 11 Foreign bills; 1830-1833
- Folder 12 Agreement, JFC and Richard Heaviside, printer, to accompany JFC to  
 Florence to work on book; n.d.
- Folder 13 Draft indenture, JFC to John Whitford, re: Wm. Cooper agreement; n.d.
- Folder 14 Leases—list of amounts due; n.d.

(cont.)

- Folder 15 Deposition of Sidney Ketchum re: promissory note (Gibbs, Gordon & Sandford case; n.d. (c. 1839?))
- Folder 16 Memos re: Gibbs, Gordon & Sandford case (2 items, dated 1839 [?], 1839-1845)
- Folder 17 2 leaves removed from account book: JFC in account with estate of Wm. Cooper, deceased (cut from acc't book in Paris, 4/23/1827 by Wm. Cooper); sheets dated 1810-1811; 1817
- Folder 18 4 leaves removed from account book: account of William Van Booskirk (cut from acc't book in Paris, 4/23/1827 by Wm. Cooper); sheets dated 1813-1817
- Folder 19 Account of money paid Courtland C. Cooper by various people and paid by him; 8/31/1816
- Folder 20 4 leaves removed from account book: monies paid and received (cut from acc't book in Paris by Wm. Cooper, 4/23/1827); sheets dated 1816

5 Business Papers, n.d.; 1804-1852

- Folder 1 Appleton foot case; 1814-1817
- Folder 1A Articles of Agreement between JFC and Alpha Perry and Daniel D. Boles re: transfer of land to Perry and Bowles
- Folder 2 Leaf removed from account book; account of Mount Ovis (on verso spelled Otis) (cut from acc't book in Paris by Wm. Cooper, 4/23/1827); 1813; 1817
- Folder 3 4 leaves removed from account book; account of Courtland C. Cooper (leaves removed by Wm. Cooper, 4/23/1827, Paris); 1814-1815; 1817
- Folder 4 Articles of Agreement between JFC and Robert Ward for building a house in Scarsdale; 1817
- Folder 5 Land sold to Gordon Mumford; 1819  
Agreement re: promissory note of JFC held by Mumford  
JFC purchase of ship, "Union of NY" from Mumford
- Folder 6 Articles of Agreement, JFC and Edward Miles (?) re: work to be done; 1819
- Folder 7 Tabulation of 1820 census, listed by state and companion to earlier figures for NY, NJ, PA, and miscellaneous other information; [1820]
- Folder 8 Bond, JFC to Robert McDermot for ship; 182\_; 1821
- Folder 9 Bill of sale for crops, stock, etc., to JFC to secure rent; Ebenezer Holmes; 1822
- Folder 10 Assignment of mortgage bond, estate of Wm. Cooper; 1804-1826  
Schedule of property of Wm. Cooper, prepared during contesting of Wm. Cooper's will; other related papers; 1822  
Summary of Wm. Cooper's will; 1836
- Folder 11 Memo of agreement between JFC and Charles Wiley and Oliver Halsted, Booksellers, re: 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. of *The Spy*; 1822  
Account of *The Pioneers* with J. Murray; 1823  
Account of sales of books by Halsted; 1825

(cont.)

- Folder 12 "George Willits and William H. Cornell have given a joint Bond of Indemnification to James Cooper ..."; signed Brookes; 1823
- Folder 13 Note about interest owing JFC, signed by Brookes; 1823
- Folder 14 "An Act Authorizing James Cooper to assume a middle name"; 1826
- Folder 15 Account and statement for books (including expenses for several of JFC's books (*The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pilot*, *Lionel Lincoln*); 1826
- Folder 16 Account of JFC with Robert Campbell (attorney); 1817-1819
- Folder 17 Appraisal of stock; 1818
- Folder 18 Account of purchase of clothing items and fabric; 1818  
Account of tailoring and repair work on clothing; 1818-1821
- Folder 19 Account of purchases (food staples and household items; owed to Monmouth Lyon); 1818-1819
- Folder 20 Promissory notes, signed by JFC; 1825; 1836; 1844; 1845; 1846
- Folder 21 Miscellaneous agreements, contracts, indentures, copyright certificates, legal proceedings, insurance policies, subpoenas, receipts, etc.; n.d.; 1804-1824
- Folder 22 Same as folder 21; 1825-1852

6 Business Papers, etc., n.d.; 1834-1897

- Folder 1 Listing of Wm. Cooper's property in "Feronia," in JFC's hand; 1834
- Folder 1A Articles of Agreement between JFC, as surviving executor of Wm. Cooper estate, and William Averell; 1834
- Folder 2 Declaration of Trust, signed by JFC for Horace Comstock; 1835
- Folder 3 JFC Last Will and Testament (see also late will, 1849); 1835
- Folder 4 Release from agreement re: \$2,000 investment in Illinois with J. Ogden; 1835
- Folder 5 Account book of JFC with NY provisioner, J. \_\_\_\_\_ (?); 1835-1837
- Folder 6 Cooperstown; deeds of Otsego Hall and grounds, etc.; 1835-1844
- Folder 6A Trader's Fire Insurance Co. policy; 1836
- Folder 7 Promissory note, JFC to Paul F. Cooper; 1838
- Folder 8 Plan of subscription for Hall for Athenian Institute; 1838
- Folder 9 Promissory note, Sidney Ketchum; papers re: attempt to collect; 1839
- Folder 10 Court order to E. D. Richardson to appear in court for case between JFC and Thurlow Weed; 1841
- Folder 11 Horace M. Comstock, correspondence re: deed, property, and sums owing JFC (deed in oversize folder, 3/16/1841, for property in Kalamazoo, MI); 1841; 1842
- Folder 12 JFC action against Sidney Ketchum re: promissory note; 1845
- Folder 13 Supreme Court, notice of retainer by defendant's attorney, JFC vs. J. S. Sandford; 1845

(cont.)



- Folder 14 Promissory note to City Bank of NY; 1845
- Folder 14A Agreement, use of "stereotype" plates of *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*, from 1845 to 1856; 1845
- Folder 15 Order for time to plead, Supreme Court, James Sandford; 1846
- Folder 16 William Stone vs. JFC; 1846  
"Defts. points" (i.e., the points made by the defendant, JFC; n.d.)
- Folder 17 Court for Correction of Errors, Wm. L. Stone vs. JFC; copy costs; 1846
- Folder 18 Account of traveling expenses incurred for trip by Comstock to Michigan on JFC's behalf (?); 1847
- Folder 19 Papers re: attempts to collect on 1837 note of Horace Comstock (also involving Isaac Schuyler, Sidney Ketchum, case against Gibbs & Gordon)
- Folder 20 Attempt to collect from Sidney Ketchum; 1847
- Folder 21 Agreement to rent store in Cooperstown by JFC, to Wm. A. Comstock & Co.; 1847
- Folder 22 Copy, Supreme Court, JFC vs. James S. Sandford, et al. (Gordon & Gibbs) and other documents re: this case relating to 1839 promissory note (Detroit, MI, George Hand att'y for JFC); 1848
- Folder 23 Isaac Schuyler, Power of Attorney to JFC; 1848
- Folder 24 JFC Last Will and Testament; 1849 (see also earlier will, 1835)
- Folder 25 Sidney Ketchum, affidavit re: attendance at court in Detroit (re: Gibbs, etc. case); 1849  
Nathaniel Eldridge (the same); 1849
- Folder 26 Deposition Papers,; JFC vs. Gibbs & Gordon; 1836-1839
- Folder 27 Deposition Papers; JFC vs. Gibbs & Gordon; 1847 (re: 1839)
- Folder 28 Deposition Papers; JFC vs. Gibbs & Gordon; 1849
- Folder 29 Partial copy of Last Will and Testament, dated 11/8/1849; 1851
- Folder 30 Receipt for taxes paid on land in Kalamazoo; 1850
- Folder 31 Deposition papers; JFC vs. Gibbs, Gordon, etc.; 1850
- Folder 32 Receipt for \$500 subscription to Fort-Plan & Cooperstown Road Co. by JFC; 1850
- Folder 33 Bishop DeLancey's notes on order of funeral procession of JFC; 1851
- Folder 34 Kalamazoo County, MI, A council of probate re: JFC will; 1852
- Folder 35 JFC calling card; paper currency(xerox copy to Graphic Arts); n.d.
- Folder 36 Various envelopes; one memoranda sheet, etc.; n.d.
- Folder 36A Portraits of JFC, Twinkles newspaper, 5/10/1897
- Folder 37 Newspaper clipping commemorating 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JFC's birth; n.d.
- Folder 37A Dealers descriptive list of JFC letters for sale; n.d.
- Folder 38 History of ownership of J. F. Cooper House in Burlington, NJ, plus copy

7 Account Book, etc., n.d.; 1826-1851

Account Book 1 Household expenses; 1834-1845

Account Book 2 Paris; [1838]-1842 (pages for 1838 removed)

Account Book 3 Real estate; 1844-1851

Account Book 4 Italy, France, Germany; 1828-1830

Account Book 5 Real estate; 1829-1835

Account Book 6 JFC: "An Account Book containing Items of Monies I received when from Home--began Augst 1826"; 1826-1845

Folder 1 Account book 7; France; 1846-1849  
Account book 8; France; 1850

Folder 2 Account book: hardware, and days worked account; 1837  
Unidentified account book, clothing, food, sundries; n.d.

Folder 3 Xeroxes of various JFC mss., from the C. Waller Barrett Collection at University of Virginia (delivered by Kay House, 7/20/90)

8 Miscellaneous Item

Part of the bed on which JFC died, 9/14/1851

**Oversize Manuscript Box**1 Miscellaneous Business Papers, n.d.; 1811-1846

Folder 1 Resolution of meeting held in Westchester Co., NY, against War of 1812; n.d.

Folder 2 Apprenticeship agreement between Samuel Conklin and JFC for services of Conklin's daughter Catherine; 1811

Folder 3 Deed for property in Dekalb, (lot no. 401, 100 acres) from Denis and Lidia [sic] Thayer; 1815

Folder 4 Deed for property in DeKalb, (lot no. 1) from Barton Carver to JFC; 1816

Folder 5 Deed for property in Edmeston [sic] (Otsego Co.; Wharton Patent, lot no. 4 in Great Lot No. 6) from Asa and Lydia Luce to JFC; 1817

Folder 6 Quit claim on land in Wharton Patent belonging to the estate of Wm. Cooper and deeded to JFC by Isaac Cooper, exec for Wm. Cooper, Samuel Cooper, and George and Ann Pomeroy; 1817

Folder 7 Deed for land purchased by JFC at public auction ...; 1817

Folder 8 Deed for property in Cooperstown from John and Catherine Prentiss to JFC; 1818

Folder 9 Transfer of rights of Robert Sedgwick by JFC for lands; 1818

Folder 10 Draft of agreement (?) re: JFC assessment of mortgages; 1819 (?)

Folder 11 Account of JFC with Josiah Bradlee & Co.; 1820

Folder 12 Account of JFC with Welles & Co., Paris; 1828-1829

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- Folder 13 Deed for land in Spring Wells, MI, from Charles Trowbridge to Sidney Ketchum; 1836
- Folder 14 Deed for property in Middlefield (Otsego Co.) from Ebenezer Ingals to Calvin Graves and Lyman Ball; 1838
- Folder 15 Deed of property in Farmington, MI, from Elijan and Lucy Ann Cook to Isaac Schuyler; 1839
- Folder 16 Deed for property in Middlefield (Otsego Co.) from Asa Luce to JFC; 1839
- Folder 17 Deed for property in Middlefield (Otsego Co.) from Isaac Fitch and Malinda [sic] Fitch to JFC; 1840
- Folder 18 Deed for property in Kalamazoo, MI, from Horace H. and Sarah Comstock to JFC; 1841
- Folder 19 Deed for property in Michigan previously conveyed by Sidney Ketchum, now conveyed by Isaac Schuyler to Wm. J. Roome; 1841
- Folder 20 Letter, JFC to Mr. Edward Myers (?); mounted on board with original watercolor painting by R. W. Van Buskirk; letter dated 4/3/1843; painting dated "NY 1879"
- Folder 20A Letter, including DeLancey family record, to JFC from Robert Bolton, Jr.; dated 3/29/1845
- Folder 21 Deed for land in Middlefield (Otsego Co.) from Calvin and Fanny Graves to JFC, 1846
- Folder 22 Map of village of Kalamazoo showing lots owned by JFC; n.d.
- Folder 23 Deed for property (a farm) in Scarsdale from James and Susan Augusta Cooper to William Shotwell; 1819
- Folder 24 Deed for farm in Scarsdale from JFC and wife Susan Augusta Cooper to William Shotwell; 1820