

**American Antiquarian Society
Manuscript Collections**

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Foster, Nathan Lanesford, Papers, 1804-1882

LOCATION(S):

Octavo vols. "F"
Mss. boxes "F"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

eighty-five octavo volumes; one manuscript box

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Purchased from Michael Brown, 2001

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Nathan Lanesford Foster (1787-1860), poet and itinerant book agent, was the son of Rev. Joel Foster (1755-1812) and Priscilla (Foster) Foster (1756-1803). He was born on 8 December 1787 in East Sudbury, now Wayland, Mass. In 1805 he moved to Brattleboro, Vt., to read law with his brother-in-law, Samuel Elliot (1777-1845). Following the premature death of his sister, Fanny Foster Elliot (1783-1806), he continued his legal studies in Woodstock, Conn. After a brief period of teaching school in Wethersfield, Conn., he moved in 1809 to East Haddam, Conn., where he remained for the next thirty years. In East Haddam he practiced law, farmed, taught school, wrote poetry, was active in town government and in the Episcopal Church, and possibly for a time kept a tavern. His last move was to Philadelphia in 1840; he died there on 9 November 1860.

On May 30, 1811, he married Azuba Louisa Cone (1788-1859) of East Haddam, the daughter of William Cone (1753-1827) and Azuba Olmstead (1758-1835). They had ten children all born in East Haddam: Joel William Lanesford (1813-1848); Elizabeth Louisa (1815-1882) who married Eleaza Watrous Mather (1812-1887); William Cone (1817-1817); Marie Antoinette (1818-1873) who married John Holmes (-1856); John Webster (1821-1863) who married, first, Elizabeth Cahoon (-1842) and then Nancy Cutler; Edgar Theodore (1823-) who married Anna

Lippincott (1829-1881); Mary Sophia (1825-) who married George Henry Chadwick; Catharine Lunan Tonnele (1828-) who married William King (1823-); Reginald Heber (1831-) who married Joanna Dilkes; and Henry (“Henri”) Lysander (1833-) who married Angelica Constantia Wenzell (1838-).

This collection consisting of eighty-three diaries of Nathan Lanesford Foster, for the period 1804 to 1860, chronicles the life of a man who loved words. Lanesford* read widely, wrote poetry that was published, and was a prodigious correspondent. He created acrostics for friends and even sent one to Andrew Jackson.

This literary passion probably was responsible for Lanesford’s mid-life transformation from a solid, country man, with roots in rural Connecticut to a traveling book salesman whose bailiwick included the Hudson Valley, parts of New England and much of the eastern seaboard. His career change began cautiously enough in the fall of 1838. In his diary entry for September 1, 1838 he notes that he “commenced gett(in)g subs. for Tongue of Time.” On October 6 he writes that he “went out with books & sub(scriptio)n...pretty successful in gett(in)g subs.” By October 27 he was reporting “ar. home, past sunset; having distrib(ute)d & sold 40 books.”

This success led to a contract with the publisher George W. Gorton of Philadelphia, to sell book subscriptions. Before the end of 1838 his new venture had taken him as far as New York City, Philadelphia and Baltimore. At the end of 1840 he moved his family to Philadelphia, completing the break with his old life.

For the next nearly twenty years Lanesford canvassed his territory by stage, train, and ship—often being away for months at a time. His most harrowing trips were those that took him out into the stormy Atlantic. After each such journey a sea-sick Lanesford would swear that he had taken his last voyage.

The diaries, even though each day’s entry is usually no more than six or seven lines, contain a wealth of information about Lanesford’s business life and his daily activities. He notes the books* which were currently on his list as well as his procurement and delivery of orders. He took care to advance the sale of his poems which went through at least six editions. When he gives vent to his emotions the cause is most often anxiety about his children, disappointment and frustration over lagging sales, and, in his last years, bitterness at his wife’s rejection.

Lanesford was a faithful diarist who accounted for every day. In general he notes: the weather; his health; his expenses; books read and poems written; texts of the Sunday sermons; correspondence sent and received; birthdays and anniversaries of deaths of family members; and gardening chores. Important items to be referred to again are marked “Mem.,” “Rem.” or “N.B.”.

*The several letters in the collection indicate that “Lanesford” was his preferred first name.

*Exact titles of the books mentioned in the diaries are not always discernible. Therefore the use of quotation marks is random.

The last years of Lanesford's life were sad ones. His health, never of the best, began to fail. His financial situation did not allow him to maintain a home of his own and he became dependent on his children for shelter. His wife became increasingly distant; at the time of her death, she and Lanesford were totally estranged.

The collection also contains three diaries of Lanesford's oldest daughter, Elizabeth Louisa Foster Mather. The diaries cover the period 1872-1882 and concern her daily domestic duties.

See Contents List.

**American Antiquarian Society
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT**

NATHAN LANESFORD FOSTER, PAPERS, 1804-1882
CONTENTS LIST

- Octavo Volume 1: Diary No. 1
 Dates: 1804 July 15-August 21
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass.
 Contents: noted Hamilton-Burr duel; went “*gunning*” several times
 Read: Madame Bona’s and Madame Moreau’s letters
- Octavo Volume 2: Diary No. 2
 Dates: 1804 August 22-December 30
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass.
 Contents: “*Read geography*”; “*went gunning*”; “*stud’d Arith. Nothing special—gather’d hazelnuts*” [Aug. 24]
 Read: “Narrative of the Indian wars”; borrowed “Children of ye Abbey”; read “Saunders Journal”; finished “Buccolicks”
- Octavo Volume 3: Diary No. 3
 Dates: 1805 January 1-March 30
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass.
 Contents: frequent headaches, took “*indian root*”; “*I began to go to Mr. Thayer’s school*” [Jan. 28]; “*Pa preached*” [Feb. 3]; squabble between Nathan’s father and step-mother—along with sister sympathized with “*Pa*”; noted his attendance or absence at Sunday meeting
 Read: in “Sorrows of Werter”
- Diary No. 4 missing
- Octavo Volume 4: Diary No. 5
 Dates: 1805 June 25-November 16
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass., and Brattleboro, Vt.
 Contents: “*Diary commencing 25 June, 1805, being the day on which I left East Sudbury, Mass. for Brattleboro, Vt.*” [lived with sister Fanny Elliot in order to study law with her husband, Samuel Elliot, Esq.]; assisted in post office in early July
 Read: “Haunted Priory”, Hume’s “England”, Pope’s “Essays on Man”, began Blackstone’s “Commentaries”; objects to T. Paine’s “scurrilous letter to George Washington”
- Octavo Volume 5: Diary No. 6
 Dates: 1805 November 17-1806 February 7
 Location(s): Brattleboro, Vt.
 Contents: “*J. Elliot sat out for Congress*” [Nov. 19]; “*unwell, rain, went to bed at 7 tonight tho’ ½ past 9 is the usual hour*” [Dec. 6]

- Read: "Theodore", "She Lives in Hopes", the Bible, Hume, "Stranger in France", "Rule of Life", Vol. 3 of Blackstone, "The Gamesters"
- Octavo Volume 6: Diary No. 7
 Dates: 1806 February 8-April 30
 Location(s): Brattleboro, Vt.
 Contents: Fanny's son, Edwin Day born—Fanny very sick [Mar. 11]
 Read: "Innocent Sufferer", "Gentleman's Miscellany", the Bible
- Diary No. 8 missing
- Octavo Volume 7: Diary No. 9
 Dates: 1806 July 16-November 10
 Location(s): Brattleboro, Vt.
 Contents: Fanny Elliot has consumption—she is "*weak & distressed with pain*" [July 18]; Fanny dies—"what an awful [*sic*] thing it is to die!" [July 26]; occasionally buys a share of a lottery ticket; in Oct., goes to East Sudbury—concludes "*to tarry in this town for awhile*"
 Read: Rasselas and Dinarbas, "Peake on Evidence", "Chitty on Bills", "Rules in Declamation", "Edwy and Edilda"
- Diary No. 10 missing
- Diary No. 11 missing
- Octavo Volume 8: Diary No. 12
 Dates: 1807 May 18-July 28
 Location(s): Brattleboro, Vt.
 Contents: buys a share of a lottery ticket; "*attended Freemason's Festival up in town*" [June 24]; studies notes on "Blackstone's Commentaries"
 Read: "Blair's Lectures", "Life of Bonaparte", "Powell on Contracts", "Political Farrago", "Bacon's Abridgement", "Volney's Ruins", "Merchant of Venice", "Macbeth", "Merry Wives of Windsor", "Measure for Measure"
- Diary No. 13 missing
- Octavo Volume 9: Diary No. 14
 Dates: 1807 November 16-1808 February 4
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass., and Woodstock, Conn.
 Contents: "*Went to Concord with Pa who exchanged with Mr. Ripley*" [Nov. 28]; sets out for Woodstock with "Pa" [Dec. 1]; "*Began this day to board with Mr. Bowen and to study law with John McClellan, Esq. ...one year*" [Dec. 3]; plays the flute occasionally; moves to board with Mr. Perry
 Read: Washington's Life, "Vision of Columbus" by Barlow, Vattel, Pette's "Journey from Pride to Humility", Ossian's Poems, "Speed the Plow"

Diary No. 15 missing

- Octavo Volume 10: Diary No. 16
 Dates: 1808 April 26-July 20
 Location(s): Woodstock, Conn.
 Contents: begins to board at Bowen's [May 12]
 Read: Black & Swift; "She Stoops to Conquer", "Error of a Good Father", Mavor's [?] "History of Russia and Poland", Mavor's "Sweden", Mavor's, "Denmark", "Law of Evidence", "Nature and Art" by Mrs. Inchbald[?], 2 vols. of Cowper's Poems, "Vicar of Wakefield"
- Octavo Volume 11: Diary No. 17
 Dates: 1808 July 21-October 15
 Location(s): Woodstock, Conn.
 Contents: plays music with Flyn, two flutes, "*Pricked off a few Tunes, Broke my Spectacles*" [July 29]; made two weeks' trip to East Sudbury—on return to Woodstock boards at Mr. Paine's [Sept. 8]
 Read: "The Correspondence of Theodosius and Constantia", "Memoirs of Emma Courtney", "The Siege of Belgrade", Kirby's Rep., Root's Rep., "Cecilia or Memoirs of an Heiress", Falconer's "Shipwreck"
- Octavo Volume 12: Diary No. 18
 Dates: 1808 October 16-January 14
 Location(s): Woodstock and Wethersfield, Conn.
 Contents: "*Pa paid Mr. Bowen's bill \$13.00 & \$25.00 toward Esq. McClellan's tuition bill of \$40.00*" [Dec. 5]; "*Examined this eve with S. H. Devotion by S. Perkins, W. T. Williams & S. Backus Esqs. who were satisfied and recommended us to the Court*" [Dec. 8, at Windham]; engaged to teach school in Wethersfield @ \$21.50 per month paying the board himself [Dec. 13]; boards at Major Porter's with Mr. Pettes and Mr. Harris; discussion group/debating society formed
 Read: Vattel's "Law of Nations", U. S. Constitution, Elliot's works, Godwin's "Political Justice"
- Octavo Volume 13: Diary No. 19
 Dates: 1809 January 15-April 16
 Location(s): Wethersfield and East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: along with friends forms debating society—among topics discussed were: "*Is there any such thing as disinterested benevolence?*", "*Are the mental faculties of women inferior to those of the men?*", and "*Is novel reading beneficial?*"; having been told that someone was preparing to go to East Haddam intending to open a law office "*I closed my school this day* [Feb. 27], *having taught it 10 weeks and a day, to prepare to go to E. Haddam to practice law*"; opened law practice about the same time that "*ends Jefferson's administration*" [Mar. 3]; boards first with Mr. Lord later with Oliver Green; waits for clients—"no business yet" [Mar. 8]; draws a writ

- for Daniel Cone [Mar. 16]; attends Episcopalian church; "*Miss Azubah Cone visited me, in office*" [Mar. 15]
- Read: Tragedies, Douglas and Cato, Lavater's [?] Physiognomy, Honey Moon and Curfew, Ribbemont or Feudal Baron, Quaker, Time's a Tell Tale, The Father of an Only Child, "Wild Irish Girl", Swift, Salvo's Travel's, Lawyer's Pleadings, "Mysteries of Udolpho", Goldsmith's, "England", Ladies' Advocate, Letters to Honoria and Marianne, "The Lawyer, a Tale"
- Octavo Volume 14: Diary No. 20
 Dates: 1809 April 17-July 17
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: office signs arrive [Apr. 17]; begins taking a few Latin scholars; begins courting Azuba Cone—"a lovely girl"; "*kiss'd Azuba*" [June 27]
 Read: "Juliet Grenville", "Adelman or the Outlaw", "The Maid of the Hamlet", "Salmagundi", "The Ladies Friend", Essays of Health and Long Life, Buchan's "Domestic Medicine"
- Octavo Volume 15: Diary No. 21
 Dates: 1809 July 18-October 10
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: borrows \$30.00 from Mr. Blakslee; "*borrowed of [Mr. Blakslee] \$35.00! Gave him my note for \$65.00*" [Aug. 19]; notes ladies he has kissed
 Read: Curran, law and Greek, Mrs. Chapone's Letters, Junius' Letters
- Octavo Volume 16: Diary No. 22
 Dates: 1809 October 11-1810 January 6
 Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass., and East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: takes trip home to East Sudbury; "*Mr. Green asked me for some money. Unable to let him have any, nor could I borrow any! Good God what shall I do in my present embarrassed situation!*" [Dec. 5]
 Read: philosophical grammar, "Emmeline or the Orphan of the Castle", "Ariel or a Picture of the Human Heart", "Coelebs in Search of a Wife", Telemachus
- Octavo Volume 17: Diary No. 23
 Dates: 1810 January 7-April 6
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: buys a lottery ticket jointly with Captain O. Attwood; "*Azuba in O. with me—hem ho!*" [Feb. 6]
 Read: "Avent. Of Sig. Gaudentio diLucca", "The Power of Solitude", by Jos. Story, Cowper
- Octavo Volume 18: Diary No. 24
 Dates: 1810 April 7-June 19
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., and on board the sloop "Henry"

- Contents: “Mrs. L. [N boards with Mrs. Lyons] *ask’d me for money to pay for rent!—none to give her & no way to obtain any!*” [May 7]; makes unsuccessful inquiries about businesses or schools; “*talked with Mrs. C. [Mrs. Cone] of connexion with Azuba—approved*” [May 18]; Nathan and Azuba Cone married [May 30]; writes at length about his wedding and his hopes for the future; A. returns to her parents’ home as N returns to his father’s; writes an account of his trip to Boston on the sloop “*Henry*”
- Read: Thomson’s, “*Summer*”
- Octavo Volume 19: Diary No. 25
- Dates: 1810 June 25-September 20
- Location(s): East Sudbury and Concord, Mass., and East Haddam, Conn.
- Contents: hopes to be able to practice law in Massachusetts but is refused recommendation to the Court; through his father’s influence he borrows \$150.00 from his Uncle John and goes to Concord to study with Samuel Hoar Esq.; often visits at Parson Ripley’s in the evening; at the end of August he goes to Commencement with Parson Ripley and is “*entertain’d & edified*” by his conversation [Aug. 29]; admitted to Massachusetts Bar [Sept. 12]; considers practicing law and teaching school in Sudbury; begins to refer to Azuba as “*Louisa*”; departs for East Haddam [Sept. 20]
- Read: “*The Correspondent*”, Saunder’s Reports, statutes, Jones on Bailments, Chitty on Bills, “*Thadeus of Warsaw*”, “*The Iliad*”, Cruise on Real Property
- Diary No. 26 missing
- Octavo Volume 20: Diary No. 27
- Dates: 1811 January 1-May 12
- Location(s): Sudbury, Mass., and East Haddam Conn.
- Contents: “*kept school all day*” [Jan. 5]; describes exercises in school and visiting neighbors; “*settled with Mr. Joel Moore, having boarded with him 24 weeks this day, at \$2.00 per week [deducting 2 weeks absence]*” [Apr. 2]; journeys home [Apr. 12]; starts back for East Sudbury [May 6]
- Read: 2nd vol. Anachaises Travels, Christian Monitor, “*Zenobia*”, “*Espinase*”
- Octavo Volume 21: Diary No. 28
- Dates: 1811 May 13-1811 August 19
- Location(s): East Sudbury, Mass.
- Contents: “*worked upon highway to pay my taxes, 91 cts. about 7½ hours*” [May 22]; “*No business!*” [May 31]
- Read: or bought—Goldsmith’s, “*England*”, “*Gospel Tragedy*”, Amer. Biog. Dict.; Hannah Adam’s “*History of New England*”, Robertson’s, “*History of America*”, “*Miseries of Human Life*”, “*Life of Alexander*”, “*Life of Esther Cutler*”, Christian Monitor, “*Elizabeth or the Exiles of Siberia*”, Sterne’s “*Sentimental Journey*”, “*Female Quixotism*”, “*Miranda’s*

Expedition”, James Savage’s Oration, Trial of Wm. Hardy, “Bruce’s Travels”

Diary No. 29 missing

- Octavo Volume 22: Diary No. 30
 Dates: 1811 December 2-1812 April 3
 Location(s): “*E. Haddam, post Sudbury-in perpetuum-Began housekeeping Mar. 4, 1812*”
 Contents: “*moved from Millington to our new abode in E. Haddam*” [Mar. 4]; “*began Bible with Azuba*”
 Read: finished “Rights of Man”, read Porter’s Evidence, Ely’s poems, “William and Mary”, Haller’s “Letters to his Daughter’s”, “Self-Control”, a novel
- Octavo Volume 23: Diary No. 31
 Dates: 1812 April 4-July 1
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: moves into new office [Apr. 28]
 Read: “Curse of Sentiment”, Dr. Johnson’s “Tragedy of Irene”, “An Inquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits”, “Washington’s Official Letters”, “Trial of Arthur Hosea, Esq. of Tortola for Murder of a Slave”
- Octavo Volume 24: Diary No. 32
 Dates: 1812 July 2-September 29
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., and East Sudbury, Mass.
 Contents: “*Rec’d 3rd dunning letter from Hale!—wrote to him*” [July 2]; makes matches and works in the garden; “*This day my kind and beloved father died*” [Sept. 24]; travels to East Sudbury
 Read: “Plea before the Eccl. Council in Stockbridge in the case of Mrs. Fiske”, “The Rigid Father”, Carr’s “Northern Summer”, Tasso’s “Jerusalem Delivered”, British Spy
- Octavo Volume 25: Diary No. 33
 Dates: 1812 September 30-1813 January 7
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., and East Sudbury, Mass.
 Contents: reflection on death of father; “*agreed with Mr. H. Cone eve, to keep the school*” [Oct. 11]; began school with thirteen scholars; sets out for Sudbury to auction of his father’s goods [Dec. 20]
 Read: “Abaellino”, borrowed “Don Quixote”
- Octavo Volume 26: Diary No. 34
 Dates: 1813 January 8-April 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*closed my school having taught 20 weeks*” [Mar. 20]
 Read: “Thinks I to Myself”, borrowed Lyttleton’s Letters

- Octavo Volume 27: Diary No. 35
 Dates: 1813 May 1-August 7
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: Azubah “*presented me a son*” [Joel] [May 28]; received final payment for teaching school, total \$67.50 [July 24]
 Read: “Shipwreck”, read in Bennett’s, “London Cases”
- Octavo Volume 28: Diary No. 36
 Dates: 1813 August 8-December 17
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Contracted with Esq. Chapman to keep school*” [Oct. 25]
 Read: in Dictionary of Arts & Sciences”, read in Zimmerman
- Octavo Volume 29: Diary No. 37
 Dates: 1813 December 18-1814 May 4
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: learns of brother Joel’s death [Jan. 4]; “*Began school at the Landing*” [Apr. 4]
 Read: History of Scotland
- Octavo Volume 30: Diary No. 38
 Dates: 1814 May 5-August 27
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Carried 2 qts. rum to Capt. Palmer, towards Highway Tax and was allowed therefor \$1.31 (towards tax of \$2.31)*” [May 31]; “*at school house, no scholars*” “*wrote poem dedicated to Baptists*” [June 24]
 Read: “The Anaconda”, Sketch of Burrough’s life, read in “Elisa Powell”
- Diary No. 39 missing
- Octavo Volume 31: Diary No. 40
 Dates: 1815 January 23-May 21
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Joel—a lovely little cherub*” [Feb. 7]; “*at Landing at celebration of Peace...balloon, cannon, rockets, etc.*” [Mar. 2]; “*Ret’d home with Mrs. F. and daughter*” [Elizabeth] [May 12]
 Read: finished Epiella’s letters, read “Akenside”, Pindar, “Paine’s Trial”, “Life of Bonaparte”, Smalley’s 2 Discourses, Duncan’s Logic, read in “Evan’s sketch of Rel. Denominations”, bought a vol. of Encyclopedia
- Octavo Volume 32: Diary No. 41
 Dates: 1815 May 22-September 12
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., and Rowe, Mass.
 Contents: at town meeting, chosen town clerk and treasurer [July 6]; sets out on a journey to Rowe to visit his sister who is ill and to help settle his father’s and brother’s estates [Aug. 29]; at the closing, receives \$69.31 from his

- father's estate; on his way home from Rowe visits his mother's and sister's [Fanny] graves; calls at Capt. Robbardeau's, the place he had been born and brought up
- Read: Misc. writings of Ruby Foster, "Cannibal's Progress", report of a revival of religion in New Jersey
- Octavo Volume 33: Diary No. 42
 Dates: 1815 September 13-1816 February 19
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: pays Mr. Blakslee the principal on note, in full \$48.00 [Oct. 3]; begins examining potential school instructors; reappointed town clerk; Mr. Griswold comes to board and study law with N; in Feb. engaged to keep school "*awhile*" for an ailing teacher
 Read: "Romance? of the Forest", "Reuben or the Suicide", Blair's lectures, Silliman's journal, began to take the "Spectator".
- Octavo Volume 34: Diary No. 43
 Dates: 1816 February 20-June 8
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: has forty scholars [Apr. 16]; "*Noadiah Holmes began to live here*" [May 11], Mary and Elizabeth have the measles; engaged to keep school
 Read: Swift, Ely's journal, Edwards on full communion, "The Scottish Chiefs", "an excellent novel in 3 vols. by Miss Porter", "Glencarn, or the Disappointments of Youth" by George Watterston, Esq.
- Diary No. 44 missing
- Octavo Volume 35: Diary No. 45
 Dates: 1816 September 23-1817 January 8
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: "*At Landing collecting taxes etc.*" [Sept. 28]; "*Rode in chaise to Dea. Cone's, West Chester, to make my excuse before a board of officers, for not doing Military Duty—Pronounced by the Board not a subject of Military Duty*" [Oct. 7]; engaged to keep school [Nov. 8]; again chosen town clerk and treasurer [Nov. 11]
 Read: "Narrative of 5 Owhyhee Youth", read in "Life of Rev. John Murray", began Cair's, "Stranger in Ireland", began to take Connecticut Courant
- Octavo Volume 36: Diary No. 46
 Dates: 1817 January 9-April 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: belongs to Freeman's society—was elected clerk and treasurer; finished public school in February and his school in March; "*Began my school at my house, 5 scholars*" [Apr. 21]; bought spinning machine
 Read:

- Octavo Volume 37: Diary No. 47
 Dates: 1817 May 1-August 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “Mrs. F. presented me with another son” [William] [May 8]; sends \$14.00 to pay debt to Samuel Hoar, Esq. of Concord, Mass. [May 9]; “library meeting here” [July 1]; “Henry Jones came to board and attend school” [July 17]
 Read: finished “The Memoirs of Harriet Newell”
- Octavo Volume 38: Diary No. 48
 Dates: 1817 August 31-November 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: William died, “aged 5 months and 6 days” [Oct. 14]; chosen town clerk and treasurer again
 Read:
- Octavo Volume 39: Diary No. 49
 Dates: 1817 December 1-1818 March 27
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: Library Co. has annual meeting; one boarder leaves and new one comes
 Read: “Algerine[?] Captive”
- Octavo Volume 40: Diary No. 50
 Dates: 1818 March 28-June 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., Rowe, Mass., Brattleboro, Vt., New Salem, and Phillipston, Lancaster, Boston, Brighton, East Sudbury, and Grafton, Mass.
 Contents: chosen clerk and treasurer of Freeman’s Society; Elizabeth and Mary inoculated for kine pox; sets out with wife on trip to visit his relatives stopping in Massachusetts and Vermont [May 20]; expenses of trip itemized; joins “The Peace Society”
 Read:
- Octavo Volume 41: Diary No. 51
 Dates: 1818 July 1-October 3
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: attends Library meeting; annual meeting of “The Moral Society”; Freeman’s meeting; goes to Middleton to attend Connecticut Court began “Camilla” with his wife
 Read:
- Octavo Volume 42: Diary No. 52
 Dates: 1818 October 4-1819 January 12
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: keeping school; engaged to “keep the school this winter @ \$15.50 or \$16.00 per month” [Oct. 22]; closes private school and begins district school with twenty-one scholars [Oct. 30]; another daughter born [Marie

Antoinette] [Nov. 29]; at meeting formed a branch of Massachusetts Peace Society; chosen librarian and treasurer at annual library meeting

Read:

Octavo Volume 43: Diary No. 53
 Dates: 1819 January 13-April 18
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Indians here, made brooms & bottomed Elizabeth’s chair*” [Jan. 14]; Mr. [David Dudley] Field preached [Mar. 7]; “*closed my school, having taught 4⁷/₁₂ months—paid \$71.00 for keeping school*” [Mar. 15]; contemplating Calvinist views heard from the pulpit

Read: “Coelebs”, Falconer’s “Shipwreck”, read in “Coelebs Deceived”

Diary No. 54 missing

Octavo Volume 44: Diary No. 55
 Dates: 1819 July 22-October 10
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Geo. Griffin fin[ishe]^d boarding here & went home*” [Sept. 4]; “*Frank here with fiddle, eve, music & dancing*” [Sept. 17]; paid for Mr. Field’s account of Middlesex County

Read: Moses Stuart’s letters to W. E. Channing, concerning Divinity of the Savior

Octavo Volume 45: Diary No. 56
 Dates: 1819 October 11-1820 January 15
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: for illness “*took 75 drops of laudanum*” [Oct. 26]; at first annual meeting of East Haddam Peace Society an ode to peace written by N was sung

Read:

Octavo Volume 46: Diary No. 57
 Dates: 1820 January 16-April 26
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: “*Dismissed my private school for the present*” [Apr. 17]; seeks private school possibilities in Hartford; “*Bo’t ‘Columbian Orator’*”

Read: began reading “Camilla” with Mrs. F.

Octavo Volume 47: Diary No. 58
 Dates: 1820 April 27-October 22
 Location(s): East Haddam, Middletown, and Hartford, Conn.
 Contents: “*At Cato’s funeral at General Champion’s*” [Apr. 28]; opens school in Middletown June 13th with three scholars—by June 16 has nine scholars; returns to East Haddam on the weekends and feels “*very dejected and low spirited*” on his return to school [Aug. 21]; made arrangements to open a school in Hartford [Sept. 16]; begins school in Hartford in Dr. Lynde’s

- chambers with eleven scholars [Sept. 26]; the Fosters move to Hartford, “*quitted our old mansion where we have resided 8 ½ years*” [Oct. 3]; goods sent on by ship
- Read: T. Paine’s “Age of Reason” [*“a despicable work!”*], read in Bishop Watson’s Apology—answer to Paine’s “Age of Reason”—“*a sovereign antidote for the poison*”
- Diary No. 59 missing
- Octavo Volume 48: Diary No. 60
 Dates: 1821 May 30-1822 January 15
 Location(s): Hartford, Conn.
 Contents: pays Dr. Lynde one-quarter’s rent of house, \$18.75 [July 10]; “*bo’t ¼ ticket in National Lott[er]y*” [July 21]; begins “*in earnest to study Greek*” [Aug. 22]; recommenced school with eight scholars [Oct. 1]
 Read: “Fayette in Prison”, at circulating library paid to read “A New Covering for the Velvet Cushion” and “Ivanhoe”
- Octavo Volume 49: Diary No. 61
 Dates: 1822 January 16-August 10
 Location(s): Hartford, Conn., and Rowe, Mass.
 Contents: walks with Mrs. F. to see steamboat [May 13]; upon hearing on June 5 of his sister Sophia’s illness, travels to Rowe, Mass., arriving on June 11, two days before she dies; Mr. Hamlin paid \$8.25 for keeping school in N’s absence
 Read: Mrs. Head’s “Evidence from Heaven”, “Wild Irish Girl”, took “*No Fiction*” from circulating library
- Octavo Volume 50: Diary No. 62
 Dates: 1822 August 11-1823 March 31
 Location(s): Hartford and East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: recommences school [Aug. 12]; sick with “*cholera morbus*”, school dismissed for two weeks [Sept. 4]; Fosters [Nathan, Azuba, Elizabeth, John, Antoinette] visit East Haddam; Foster’s move from Dr. Lynde’s house to Mr. Thatcher’s [Nov. 2]; Mary, the servant girl, left “*her time having expired & Harriet Hale took her place, on trial*” [Jan. 8]; “*Harriet Hale ran away*” [Feb. 13]
 Read: “Serious Advice” [bought for Elizabeth], “Death of Abdallah”, “Sketch of my Friend’s Family”
- Octavo Volume 51: Diary No. 63
 Dates: 1823 April 1-November 8
 Location(s): Hartford and East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: Azuba has sixth child, a son, [Edgar] [Apr. 7]; consults about returning to East Haddam to establish a school [May 9]; closes school in Hartford [Sept. 4]; “*set sail from Hartford with my family and goods about 9 A.M.*”

- [Sept. 10]; expenses for third year in H. \$467.20; began school in East Haddam with three scholars [Sept. 22]; at town meeting, elected town clerk and treasurer [Nov. 3]
 Read: "Florida Pirate", "Monody"
- Diary No. 64 missing
- Octavo Volume 52: Diary No. 65
 Dates: 1824 July 5-1825 February 17
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: judgment for \$150.00 found against N [July 15]
 Read: memoirs of Dr. Kollack, "Village Sketches", Thadeus of Warsaw", read in Mrs. Chaperone's works
- Octavo Volume 53: Diary No. 66
 Dates: 1825 February 18-September 27
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: "*Mr. Monroe's administration ends and John Q. Adams commences*" [Mar. 4]; chosen moderator at Parish meeting and re-elected ass't. clerk [Apr. 18]; Azuba has daughter, Mary [July 27]; prays that his lottery ticket will win so that he can redeem the estate of his father-in-law; second year expenses in E. Haddam, \$554.55
 Read: "Yankee in England", pamphlet—"Remarks on Washington College", "Memoirs of Caroline E. Smelt", Porter's "Evidence of Christianity", "Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer", Daniel Webster's address at laying of foundation of monument at Bunker Hill; read in "Remains of Henry Kirke White", read in "The Recluse"
- Diary No. 67 missing
- Octavo Volume 54: Diary No. 68
 Dates: 1826 May 15-December 31
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: [no content—wrappers only]
- Diary No. 69 missing
- Diary No. 70 missing
- Octavo Volume 55: Diary No. 71
 Dates: 1828 March 20-November 21
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: in April decides not to buy a house but to rent that of S. Gates; accompanies his son Joel to Hartford where he has found him work with Mr. Augustus Isham; Azuba's mother, now widowed, moves with her

- daughter Betsy to Hartford [Sept. 18]; re-elected town clerk and treasurer [Oct. 6]
- Read: Mason's "Self Knowledge", P. Doddridge, "On Family Worship", the play, "Widow and Riding Horse", "The Iliad", began Homer
- Octavo Volume 56: Diary No. 72
 Dates: 1828 November 22-1829 August 11
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: called to summon a jury of inquest in death of a colored woman in a storm; delegate to Episcopalian convention [May 2]
 Read: Dr. Worcester's "Pacific Overtures", Elliot's Works, Tytler's History
- Octavo Volume 57: Diary No. 73
 Dates: 1829 August 12-1830 April 25
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: "voted that we [peace society] become auxiliary to the American Peace Society" [Oct. 29]; in Nov. bought Capt. Mack's house paid for with notes for \$450.00; pays for tavern license and buys fairly large purchases of liquor [does N keep a tavern?]; bought a dictionary, subscribes to Anti-Masonic Intelligencer
 Read: Vision of Mr. Yeoman's

 Diary No. 74 missing
- Octavo Volume 58: Diary No. 75
 Dates: 1830 December 29-1831 September 18
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: "Began abstract" [Jan. 5]; "moved 5 loads of goods to Stone Factory, and my family, (except E.) arrived at 1 o'clock P.M.—much fatigued and Mrs. F." [April 6]; "copied into my commonplace book"; another son is born [Reginald] to "my Louisa" [Sept. 10]
 Read: "Paul and Virginia", H. Clay's Biography

 Diary No. 76 missing

 Diary No. 77 missing
- Octavo Volume 59: Diary No. 78
 Dates: 1833 February 20-November 2
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: continues to teach school and is as well an examiner of prospective teachers; daughter, Antoinette, works at a factory [Basham factory?]; writes acrostics; Azuba has her 10th child, Henry, later "Henri" [Sept. 17]; writes poetry, "Reply to Elvira", for the Watchman
 Read: Meeting of Travellers, subscribes to "McDowell's Journal"

Diary No. 79 missing

Diary No. 80 missing

Diary No. 81 missing

Diary No. 82 missing

- Octavo Volume 60: Diary No. 83
 Dates: 1836 December 13-September 6
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: Elizabeth is teaching school; in Feb. she marries E. Watrous Mather of Millington, Conn.; writes an acrostic on Andrew Jackson and mails it to the president; finishes poem “*Last of his Family*”, one hundred ninety-eight lines, and writes “*Midnight Thoughts*” inspired by the illness of his daughter, Mary; son John intends to go to sea
 Read: “Locket Ring”, read in Flagg’s, Winter Evening of Tales
- Octavo Volume 61: Diary No. 84
 Dates: 1837 September 7-1838 May 30
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn.
 Contents: Mary recovers from her serious illness; [N often encloses his poems, which he has had printed, in his letters]; “*Wr. several letters to incl. my poem to several persons*” [Dec. 6]; copied “*Mary*” for the Watchman; “*Deranged visions in my brain! —O God save me from insanity!*” [Feb. 4]; finished poem “*Fetters of Columbus*”; both “*Fetters...*” and “*Consolatory Reflections*” printed in Watchman; John returns from eleven months at sea, whaling [May 22]
 Read: “Dorcassina Sheldon”, Morse’s Geography, “Voice from the Green Mountains”
- Octavo Volume 62: Diary No. 85
 Dates: 1838 May 31-1839 February 28
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., Baltimore, Md. (12/8/38), and Washington, D.C. (2/5/39)
 Contents: [N writes poetry, occasional acrostics and many letters]; summer term ends and N closes school [Sept. 28]; makes foray into world of selling books by subscription—“*pretty successful in gett[ing] subs*” [Oct. 6]; “*set out with horse & wagon to get subs. to the Tongue of Time...*” [Oct. 10]; left home for first extended trip of selling—Chester, Killingworth, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia [Dec. 2]; drew contract with Philadelphia publisher, George W. Gorton; goes by steamboat and railroad to Baltimore; notes sales or lack of them; writes poem, “*Home*”; “*Laboured hard and much discouraged and depressed*” [Jan. 10]; comments on sales and sights in Washington

Diary No. 86 missing*

- Octavo Volume 63: Diary No. 87
 Dates: 1839 November 7-1840 July 14
 Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa. (11/39-12/17/40), East Haddam, Conn. (12/20/40), [unknown location] and Baltimore, Md. (4/30-6/27/40), and East Haddam, Conn. (6/20/40)
 Contents: [While on the road N establishes what will be a pattern: he writes poetry which he sends to the local newspaper; he advertises his agency in the papers; depending on the subjects of his limited book list he canvases primarily doctors, lawyers, educators and ministers; eventually he joins the International Order of Odd Fellows for the health insurance available through them, their potential as customers and for companionship away from home; where possible he pays for goods and services with books.] notes number of subscriptions sold—"6 subs. & 2 verbal" [Nov. 8]; daughter Marie Antoinette is married to John Holmes [April 26]; goes to Phil. [April 29]; at G. W Gorton's office "*looked over old list of subscribers with Loomis...at book auction with Gorton & L. eve*" [May 1]; "*Tired badly & disheartened!*" [May 2]; "*walked far, got dust in my eye, which is very sore*" [May 5]; "*10 subs & delivered 2—(= if good \$9.80)*" [May 7]; "*walk'd 1 mile to Dr. Williamson's to carry book to Randel:—his wife would not take it*" [May 13]; in Phil. "*looked over accts. with Loomis (& paid him \$175.00)*" [June 24]; total expenses in the two months he was away, including \$10.00 sent home—\$95.80; "*commenced copying my vol. of poems*" [July 14]
- Octavo Volume 64: Diary No. 88
 Dates: 1840 July 15-1841 May 15
 Location(s): East Haddam, Conn., Philadelphia, Pa. (8/27/40), Baltimore, Md. (9/9/40), East Haddam (10/1/40), Philadelphia (11/6-11/13/40), Washington, D.C. (1/28/41), Baltimore (3/9/41), Philadelphia (3/23/41), and New York (4/10-5/28/41)
 Contents: "*Laboured hard all day in pursuit of old subs: lent Gorton \$50.00*" [Aug. 29]; "*Bo't 3 pr. women's shoes with book 3.25*" [Sept. 11]; at annual town meeting, gave up office as town clerk of East Haddam which he had held for two decades [Sept. 5]; [on his return from Baltimore N prepares to leave East Haddam and move his family to Philadelphia]; moved to Mr. Crangle's house on Phoenix St. [Nov. 24]; went with children to free school [Dec. 4]; "*wrote 'Farewell to Mt. Parnassus'*" [Jan. 7]; "*wrote to Thomas T. Gorsuch declining school*" [Jan. 13]; sent "*Farewell to Parnassus*" to W.D. Starr [his printer?]; in Washington, calls on Van

*from inside cover of Diary No. 88--Left for Baltimore Mar. 6, 1839; left for Philadelphia Mar. 16; left for home Mar. 19--arrived Mar. 22; Newport and Providence May 30-June 29; Philadelphia Aug. 29-Oct. 3; "Home"; Philadelphia Oct. 29-Dec. 20

Buren, attends Harrison's inauguration, and sells subscriptions at the Treasury Dept.

Read: "Principles of Relativity & Morality", by Rev. Mr. Stearns

Octavo Volume 65: Diary No. 89

Dates: 1841 May 16-1842 July 15

Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., New York (5/16-5/28/41 and 8/17-9/24/41), Hadlyme and Millington, Conn. (10/9-10/29/41), Hartford, Conn. (10/29-11/2/41), Baltimore, Md. (11/19-12/2/41), Burlington, N.J. (3/10/42), Mount Holly, N.J. (3/17/42), Trenton, N.J. (3/23/42), Princeton, N.J. (3/30/42), New Brunswick, N.J. (4/6/42), and Philadelphia (4/16/42)

Contents: "Wr. on poems all day" [June 1]; "At Gorton's: carried ms. of Poems to Printer" [June 9]; "At Gorton's off. & Printing Off.—a few subs.—engaged a die, to letter Poems" [July 9]; "Pack'd books, Hist. & Poems, in 2 trunks" [Aug. 17]; "Walk'd to 14th St. to deliver hist., morn. Lost 2 subs.—a great disappointment!" [Sept. 21]; Antoinette had a son [Oct. 14]; feels unwell, copies "Hymeneal Anniversary" to Louisa; on his return home, illness diagnosed as smallpox [May 29]

Read: Canstick's, "Democracy Unveiled", "Father Butler"

Octavo Volume 66: Diary No. 90

Dates: 1842 July 16-1843 September 12

Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., up the Hudson, etc., 7/20-10/1/42, New Orleans, La. (12/5/42), arrive at New Orleans (12/27/42), left New Orleans (6/16/43), Natchez, Miss. (6/18/43), "Home" [Philadelphia, Pa.] (7/12/43), and New York (8/3/43); [on the back page of the diary, N lists his stops along the Hudson]

Contents: [On N's list Quain's "Anatomy", several history and geography books and N's poems]

Prepares for his journey [July 19]; son, Reginald, is selling "Child's Picture Bibles"; writes poem "Sabbath"; writes several acrostics; [N uses term 'nisi' to indicate hoped for sales]; "No subs.: some verbal encouragement" [Aug. 30]; "sold 1 cloth Geog. to Rev. Dr. Waterbury—2 ms. credit" [Sept. 22]; [N allows some purchases of Quain's, "Anatomy", on credit]; "sold 1 hist., & took back 1 Quain dld., for want of pay" [Sept. 29]; [in Oct., has Gorton print a 2nd edition of his poems]; sails with three trunks of books for New Orleans on the brig "Gibralter"—the trip is long and arduous with the winds often being unfavorable or non-existent [Dec. 5]; "at Med. Sch. heard lectures, & witnessed the dissection of a 'subject'" [Jan. 11]; "Box of books arrived. Paid for freight & drayage, \$1.46" [Feb. 15]; "moved 2 boxes to Palmer & Hubbard's and conveyed box of Books (my 8th box recd. From Phila. unopened) to ship ... to be conveyed back to Gorton, not wanting it here" [June 1]; wrote "Adieu to New Orleans"; homeward trip via Cincinnati, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Johnstown, and Harrisburg, Pa.; leaves again for New York—took "Prospectuses of

Quain, F.B. hist. & new works on Surgery & Dentistry; & 42 Poems
[Aug. 3]

Read: Channing's, Essay, "The Home", by Frederika Bremer, the Bible

Octavo Volume 67: Diary No. 91

Dates: 1843 September 13-1844 December 25

Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa. (9/13/43), Princeton, N.J., New York, and up the Hudson, etc. (9/27-12/8/43), "and again" (4/27-7/6/44) (Elizabethtown, N.J. (4/27/44), Newark, N.J. (4/29/44), Paterson, N.J. (4/30/44), Jersey City, N.J. (5/1/44), New York (5/2/44), Newburgh, N.Y. (6/18/44), Poughkeepsie, N.Y. (6/20/44), Hudson, N.Y. (6/22/44), Albany, N.Y. (6/25/44), Troy, N.Y. (7/1/44), Lansingburgh and Waterford, N.Y. (7/5/44), and "Home" (7/6/44))

Contents: [In addition to the new books on surgery and dentistry (referred to by N as "Teeth") he adds to his list Pennsylvania Historical Collection and "Elliotson's Practice"]
"At Dr. Brewster's & Dr. Wheeler's...copied Drs. names from Directory" [Oct. 17]; son Edgar is engaged to work for the Gorton agency in Pa.; son Reginald occasionally delivers books for his father; son John works in "Beaver Mill" in Paterson in a job obtained by his father; N receives a letter from his sea-going son Joel, informing him that he is in jail in Baltimore—wants "to try to release the poor boy!" [Oct. 18, '44]

Octavo Volume 68: Diary No. 92

Dates: 1844 December 26-1846 February 18

Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., New York (4/4/45), "Home" (5/9/45), New York (9/3/45), Hadlyme and Millington, Conn. (9/15/45), Hartford, Conn. (10/9/45), New Haven, Conn. (10/14/45), New York (10/17/45), Newburgh, Albany, Troy, and Lansingburgh area, N.Y. (10/22-11-4/45), New York (11/4/45), "Home" (11/8/45), and the beginning of sea voyage to Charleston, S.C. (2/16/46)

Contents: [New to list "Diseases of the Skin", by Rayner and possibly new, Hope's "Anatomy"]
"Recd. Letter from Warden Balt. Jail informing of Joel's release" [Jan. 2]; "Recd. back Surgery from Dr. Ross, of N.Y., instead of payment for his \$10.00 note!" [Feb. 20]; "Mem. Found out Jones' meanness in disposing of the Quain I sold him, without paying for it!" [April 17]; "Got Leghorn hat bleached & press'd for 1 poem=87 1/2." [May 28]; daughter, Mary Foster, marries George Henry Chadwick [July 27]; "Wrote Poem for Odd Fellows' Offering" [Aug. 18]; stays in New York after sending Azuba and Reginald home—"Accompanied them to the ship—bade them adieu and returned to Mrs. L.'s with a heavy heart! [My mind much wandering!—Oh, my God! save me from mental derangement, I beseech thee.]" [Oct. 18]; "took back 'Teeth' from Keeney, in full of his \$5 note! & glad to get that, as the note was given 1 1/3 years ago" [Oct. 25]; departs on schooner

for Charleston, S.C, “*very lonesome here in this little cabin all alone!*”
[Feb. 16]

Read: Mitchell’s “View of the World”, the Bible

Octavo Volume 69: Diary No. 93

Dates: 1846 February 19-1847 January 12

Location(s): voyage to Charleston, S.C. (2/16-2/27/46), Charleston until return voyage (5/5-5/15/46), “Home” (5/15/46), New York (5/21/46), Hudson Valley with usual stops (6/1/46), “Home” (6/18/46), Millington, Conn. (7/8/46), and New Salem, Mass. (7/28) (trip to Massachusetts includes Sunderland, Northampton, Springfield, Westfield, Agawam, and Hartford Conn.), “Home” (9/5/46), voyage to Mobile, Ala. (12/18/46-1/13/47).

Contents: [New to list “Ency. Geo.”?; “Ger. Geo.” ?; ”Hist. F.B.”?; “Va. Hist.”] seasick on the twelve day voyage to Charleston; he describes his pitiful condition—“*Sick in my berth all day & did not go out on deck—Head wind & the sea rolling.—Oh, how distressing the rolling of the vessel, the thumping of the boom & tackle, the creaking of the rigging, and this long continued nausea at the stomach!*” [Feb. 23]; notes subscriptions sold and a compliment for his volume of poetry from Mrs. Waring who “*remarked of my little unpretending vol. that it was ‘the most beautiful little book she ever read’*” [March 23, ’46]; notes one of the difficulties of delivering books, when he has to carry the newly arrived books to his rented room “*up 39 stairs*” [Apr. 8]; on shipboard for his return trip, writes poem “*My Voyage, my First Visit, & my Adieu to Charleston, So. Ca.*”; totals expenses of the last three months [May 16]:

“My Exps. Since Feb. 16 th (3 mos.)	\$74.28 ½
Exps. Home do. do	53.12 ½
Rent, March 24 th	30
Tot. 3 mos.	\$157.41”

on the last day of his Hudson Valley trip, walked twelve miles and “*accomplished nothing—literally, nothing at all! And my only consolation is, the reflection that I have endeavored & faithfully labored to earn something for the aid of my dear Family*”; during long summer trip to Conn. and Mass., sells subscriptions as well as visiting family and boyhood scenes [June 17, ’46]; before departing on voyage to Mobile, is proposed for membership in the “*Odd Fellows*”—he is initiated into the Lodge of the I.O.O.F. on payment of \$20 in gold; writes poem, “*Retrospection*”, and begins “*My Voyage to Mobile*” and “*The Parting Year*” and “*New Year*”; endures another harrowing sea voyage—“*the most unpleasant voyage I have ever experienced, and with my present views, it will be the last I shall ever voluntarily undertake*” [Jan. 4, ’47]

Read: Bible, Charlotte Temple, read in “Robbin’s Journal”

Octavo Volume 70: Diary No. 94

Dates: 1847 January 13-December 31

- Location(s): Mobile, Ala. (1/13/47), Montgomery, Ala. (3/1/47), Mobile (3/18/47), Montgomery, (5/12/47), Mobile, (5/24/47), New Orleans, La. (5/29/47), left New Orleans (6/4/47), Cincinnati, Ohio (6/15/47), Pittsburgh, Pa. (6/18/47), Harrisburg, Pa., and “Home”, (6/22/47), New York (7/28/47), Millington, Hadlyme, and Hartford, Conn., (9/6/47), and “Home” (10/16/47)
- Contents: [New on list “1776” (publisher or supplier is “Jones”)—proves to be a good seller; “En. Geo.”; “N.J.” (History?)—N refers to an historical collection of 5 states.]
arrives in Mobile by schooner, sloop and longboat; writes several poems on this trip which he sends to local newspapers for publication—they include “*A Birthday Token*”, “*Retrospection*”, “*Laus Deo*”, and “*Anniversary Token*”; Daughter Elizabeth sends two pieces written by her and published in the New London Democrat [Feb. 24]; while at O.F. Lodge in Mobile, falls down a flight of 21 stairs—“...by the mercy of God, I was not killed by the fall, nor any bone broken...three O.F.s attended me to a Doct’s office & dressed my face and then accompanied me to my lodgings” [Mar 12]; “*Dld. His. Col. Pa. To Levison:—Same recd. back, P.M.—a defaulter. Lost Tarbell, a sub. by his wife’s gab*” [Aug. 10]; after much searching the Fosters agree to move to a house on Marlboro St. @ \$120 a year [Dec. 8]; prepares to leave for Savannah
- Octavo Volume 71: Diary No. 95
Dates: 1848 January 1-December 31
Location(s): Savannah, Ga. (1/9/48), after a voyage of eight days; Augusta, Ga. (6/5/48), Aiken, S.C. (6/6/48), Charleston, S.C. (6/6-6/9/48), home by schooner (6/15/48), New York (9/18/48), Hadlyme, Millington, and Hartford, Conn. (9/29/48), Boston, Charlestown, and Lowell, Mass. (10/10/48), New York (11/7/48), and “Home” (11/11/48)
Contents: [Added to list—“Signers Dec. Ind.”; “Gen’l View”; “Child’s 1st Book”; “V. of the World”; “Apostle Fathers”; Clarke’s Comt. of 4 vols.”; “Ewell’s Medical Companion”; Letters of Voltaire; Life of Christ.]
“copies out” poem “*Voyage to the South*”, writes “*A Devotional Thought*” and “*A Birthday Token*”; forced to spend an extra week in Augusta in May because an ordered shipment of books has been delayed; “*Loaned G.W. Gorton \$300: children’s money*”, & took his note: secured by deposit of a 1000 dollar note vs. Witters?” [Aug. 21]
- Octavo Volume 72: Diary No. 96
Dates: 1849 January 1-December 31
Location(s): “Home”, Baltimore, Md. (4/13/49), Frederick, Md. (6/14/49), “Home” (7/3/49), via New York and Boston, Mass. to Roxbury and Lowell, Mass. (8/6/49), “Home” (11/22/49), and Baltimore (12/12/49)

- Contents: [Added to list: “Ex. Exped.”, “Mexican War”; “Home Book of Medicine”; “Cyc. Med”?; “Lynch”—William F. Lynch, “Narrative of the U.S. Expedition to the Jordan & Dead Sea”]
in January, learns of the death of his son Joel in Genoa; writes poem “*Odd Fellow’s Wife*”; “*Closed settlement of a 5 years’ acct. with Gorton...*” [April 10]; on second day home his entry suggests domestic troubles to come: “...*Took seidlitz, unwell: No comfort here!—Took dinner with dear Catharine, Mrs. King.—Wrote on accounts all day in my chamber.—Thus spent I Independence!*” [July 4]
- Octavo Volume 73: Diary No. 97
Dates: 1850 January 1-1851 February 1
Location(s): Baltimore, Md., Washington, D.C. (1/19/50), Fredericksburg, Va. (3/19/50), Richmond, Va. (3/28/50), Norfolk, Va. (5/4/50), Washington (6/1/50), Annapolis, Md. (6/13/50), “Home” (6/22/50), New York, and Hartford, Millington, and Hadlyme, Conn. (7/3-7/26/50), Boston and Roxbury, Mass. (8/17/50), New Salem, Athol, and Ashby, Mass. (8/23-10/30/50), “Home” (10/31/50), Pittsburg, Pa. (11/23/50-1/3/51), and Cincinnati by steamer, arrived Jan. 8
- Contents: [Added to list: “Ric.”?; “Maclise.”; almanacs—possibly Palmer’s; “Kitchener on Cooking”; Blind Bowen; “Scenes in Gold Region” and/or “Sights in the Gold Region”]
in Washington, “*At Capitol at 8 to secure a seat to hear Danl. Webster: kept my station 7 ½ hours—heard Webster’s speech re slavery etc. 3 hours*” [Mar 7]; “*Wrote poem for the “Christian Banner”—“Mary, the Mother of Washington”* [Mar. 25]; “*Wrote to E. Walker, to print my 4th Edi. & to Jones to get my st. plates, for Walker...*” [June 6]; “*Dr. Webster executed*” [N has followed the Webster-Parkman murder case from its beginning] [Aug. 30]; “*Paid McRae \$10 towds. his bill of \$30, for steel frontispiece of my 4th Edi.—Paid Walker \$60 towds. his bill for 1020 poems of \$459.*” [Oct. 29]; expresses his dislike of Pittsburgh “*the filthiest & most disagreeable city I have ever been in, to do business...*” [Nov. 25]; after a day on which he returned to his boarding house without dinner and “*cold & tired*” he writes “*Should any member of my family ever read this, they may shed a tear to my memory, in view of my hardships*” [Dec. 23]; having received no patronage from 4 Episcopal ministers upon whom he called in Cincinnati, writes, “*The very hardest set of clergymen, I have ever found!*” [Jan. 23]
- Diary No. 98 missing
- Octavo Volume 74: Diary No. 99
Dates: 1852 January 1-1853 February 5
Location(s): “Home”; New York (3/17/52), “Home” (5/20/52), Pottsville, Pa. (9/1/52), Mauch Chunk, Pa. (9/30/52), Reading, Pa. (10/13/52), “Home” (10/30/52) and Petersburg, Va. (1/18/53)

- Contents: [Added to list: N's poems, "Odd Fellow Offerings"; sets of "Wilkes"; Lynch continues to be a best seller]
"Finished communica. to Jenny Lind, & sent it, in a copy of my poems, best, Red Moroc. Gilt..." [Jan. 7]; son Henri, as well as daughter Elizabeth, writes poetry—writes *"The Dreams of Life"*, *"Elegiac Stanzas for Mr. B."* and *"Birthday of Washington"*; agonizes over behavior of son, Reginald, and hopes that he will not disappoint him as his son Joel had: *"God grant I may not, now, have on hand another erring son!"* [May 23]; writing *"Devotional Meditations No. 3"* [May 30]; *"spent the A.M. in Chamber; and prepared a Prospectus, to be printed, of my 5th Edi."* [July 9]; *"Wrote poem Ashton, a pastoral"* [Nov. 15]; *"(Home rendered miserable, by the behaviour of sons)"* [Nov. 26]; in Petersburg, pays \$2.17 for a license to sell books. [in this diary N begins noting the number of days he spends at home as well as away]
- Octavo Volume 75: Diary No. 100
 Dates: 1853 February 6-November 19
 Location(s): Petersburg, Va., Lynchburg, Va. (3/19/53), Alexandria, Va. (5/2/53), "Home" (6/17/53), East Haddam, Conn. (7/28/53), "Home" (8/13/53), Bristol, Pa. (9/21/53), Doylestown, Pa. (10/12/53), and Norristown, N.J. (10/28/53)
 Contents: in order to assist son Henri in buying a piano, lends him \$35.00 [Mar. 7]; in Lynchburg, officiates as chaplain at the burial service of a brother O.F.; cost of doing business in Va.: paid tax for 3 weeks' license [April 30]; *"Call'd on Mayor, & several functionaries, morn & find the prospect of doing business here, very unfavorable: license & taxes so exorbitant"* [May 3]; and *"Called at Sheriff's Office, & paid to Clayton, Commissioner of the Revenue, for a License to sell books, (in Alexia. Co. 1 year), \$5.00 & his fee, 50. And called at Mayor's Office & paid him, corporation license, \$2.50—making the exorbitant Tax of 8 Dollars, for the privilege of working here, a few weeks!"* [May 4]; *"Moved up another story: am now in the Attic, =62 stairs from dining Room!—but—mem. My board reduced 2/7=\$2.50 per week"* [May 19]; at home, is unwell and *"borne down by grief and mental anguish!—O, my family Altar is overthrown: & my dear family ties are dissolved!—Would, that I could lay down in the Grave, in peace!"* [June 3]
 Read: "Uncle Tom's Cabin", "19th Century"
- Octavo Volume 76: Diary No. 101
 Dates: 1853 November 20-1854 August 6
 Location(s): Norristown, Pa., Manayunk, Pa. (12/5/53), "Home" (12/17/53), Lowell, Mass. (5/18/54), "Home" (6/10/54), East Haddam and Hadyme, Conn. (7/22/54), and Greenfield, Mass. (8/2/54)
 Contents: [Added to the list: first four vols. of "Jefferson"—eventually to have all of H.A. Washington's 9 vol. "Works of Thomas Jefferson"]

“Catharine’s birthday. Wrote for her a poem: “A Mother’s Lay, to her darling Henri” [Feb. 8]; “N.B. At Gorton’s a long time; and at last adjusted & balanced our acct. from Jan. 1853, to this date & paid him in full for books, had to sell, up to present time & paid him, (by money he had rec’d. of mine from Cincinnati,) twds. a Note for \$169 obtained oppressively in 1849, \$50.21...and, Mem: All I ever intnd to pay thereon!” [Feb. 25]; “2 subs. Jeff. Rudman & G. Moore & dld. 1 to M & 2 subs. L [Lynch] & dld. 2—(got (11th) 1 & 2 Jeff. & 2 L. of Gorton; paid, towds. them, 15.00)=A good day’s work in prospective=13.25” [Mar. 16]; went to hear Mrs. Hannah Thomas, a medium, lecture on spiritualism—as usual he is unimpressed with “spritualists” [April 9]; praises minister for “a brilliant discourse” and for “touching, also very pathetically, upon the fugitive slave, recently tried in Boston & sent back into slavery in Virginia.” [June 4]; more domestic grief “Cooler morn: (which being spoken of, gave offence—& caused a great outbreak of passion & impudence from mother & son)” [July 1]

- Octavo Volume 77: Diary No. 102
 Dates: 1854 August 7-1855 November 30
 Location(s): Greenfield, Mass., Rowe, Mass. (8/8/54), Sunderland, Mass. (8/12/54), New Salem, Mass. (8/19-8/24/54), then returned to Greenfield, Northampton, Mass. (9/1-9/19/54), Springfield, Mass. (9/22/54), “Home” (10/21/54)—sick from December 6, 1854 to February 10, 1855, Lancaster, Pa. (5/23/55), Columbia, Pa. (8/22/55), York, Pa. (7/12/55), Wrightsville, Pa. (7/31/55), Columbia (8/1/55), “Home” (8/7/55), Hartford and East Haddam (9/7/55), “Home” (9/25/55), Chester, Pa. (10/26/55), “Home” (11/3/55), Chester (11/5/55), “Home” (11/22/55), Chester (11/29/55), and Wilmington, Del. (11/30/55)
- Contents: on journey through northwestern Mass., he sells a good number of “Lynches”: “Obtd. 4 subs L.--A.M., & 5 subs. L. P.M.—(pretty fair day’s work.—)” [Aug. 16]; sells 29 L. in Greenfield; in Northampton sells a few L. to clergy at a discount “*courtesy to the clergy!*” [Sept 5]; delivers “*I to Isabella G. Clarke, who paid 50 cts. towds. it, & is to send by mail, in Nov., to Philad. the bal. \$3.—& I ‘guess’ she’ll do it. (Good Girl. vid. Nov. 16)*” [Sept. 19]; poems selling well also; afflicted with painful boils and is confined to his home but he writes that he is “*watched over, cared for & kindly nursed by my dear faithful wife...*” [Dec. 12]; “*Rec.d order from Lodge for \$6, two weeks benefits*” [Jan 1, ’55]; Fosters move—“*across the street to Carr’s house 148*” [Mar. 23]; “*[Much grieved to be asked by my dear wife, for money & not being able to give her any!]*—At home—*doing nothing—& very unhappy—lost—& discontented*” [May 11]; Henri marries [it seems that N and Louisa will share a home with Henri and his wife] [May 15]

- Octavo Volume 78: Diary No. 103
 Dates: 1855 December 1-1856 November 30

- Location(s): Wilmington, Del., “Home” (12/20/55), “Journey to Lowell”, (including Boston and Roxbury, Mass., and East Haddam and Hadlyme, Conn.) (5/22-9/12/56), “Home” (9/13/56), New York (9/30/56), Mauch Chunk, Pa. (10/15/56), and “Home” (11/3/56)
- Contents: [N begins selling “Voice to America” for Walker] in his 19 days in Wilmington, earned \$54.85 [Dec. 20]; for a month, from Jan. 28-Feb.20, is employed by a Mr. Palmer in Philadelphia to sell advertising and subscriptions to “*N. America*”—decides against continuing in the business; Mrs. F. complains that “*I give her nothing and give Mary [daughter] everything*” [Mar. 12]; on his trip to Lowell, visits the cemetery where he “*viewed the very romantic ‘grounds’*” and “*sold I poem to Oliver Moulton, in the cemetery; in which he has a very nice Lot*” [Aug. 1]; during Oct. and Nov. wrote several poems: “*The Family Altar*”[may have been written earlier]; “*Votive Aspira*”; “*Poem No. 2 Happy Home*”; and “*Retrospection*”
- Octavo Volume 79: Diary No. 104
- Dates: 1856 December 1-1857 August 11
- Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., Hadlyme or East Haddam, Conn. (12/18/56), “Home”, at Henri’s (4/25/57), Easton, Pa. (7/16/57), “Returned to Philada.” (8/11/57).
- Contents: [N selling mostly his own poems and the standard best seller “Lynch”] First page of diary is marked “*Copy of a note to Henri, Sund. June 14, 1857*”: asks Henri’s advice as to whether he should leave his wife or not—“*I cannot live here. No sympathy! No social feeling! Hated, and hating one another*”; this diary is mainly concerned with family problems: his work as executor of his son-in-law, John Holmes’, estate; his growing estrangement from his wife; and his feeling of homelessness, as he is passed from one child’s household to the next; long memorandum recounting a conversation with Mrs. F. in which she charges him with being a tyrant and said she was afraid of him [June 25]; “*Began labour, morn. Called on Ministers—3 Prots. and 1 Cathc. Got 4 subs. L. [Lynch] & 3 do poems & deld. 1 poem paid. (Elsegood, Episcl.) Rested all P.M. Warm—Bed-bugs rife!*” [July 17]
- Octavo Volume 80: Diary No. 105
- Dates: 1857 August 12-1858 March 20
- Location(s): East Haddam and Hadlyme, Conn. (8/20/57), “Home” [20th St.& Poplar] (10/24/57).
- Contents: This diary entitled “*A New Era in my Life!*”
“*Philada. Wed. August 12, 1857*
A new Era in my life seems to have commenced with this No. of my diary, (No. 105.) I commenced my Diary, or daily Record, in 1804, in my 17th year; and have continued it, without intermission, from that time to the present, in a series of little books,

like the present,—varying in size but regularly numbered, from 1, up to the present, which is No. 105.---And, oh! On reflection, what a variety of fortune have I been through, during the period of 53 years!—now in my 70th year! I am the last survivor of my Father's household, (7 in number), since June 1822:—over 35 years! 1857. (Wed. Aug. 12) A new Era, I have said, seems to have begun at this time—my entries herein will necessarily vary from what they have hitherto been; they will be more full more diffuse, & perhaps more interesting to surviving Friends, if, haply, a friendly eye should ever read them”

[N only sells a few books now, mostly his poetry, from time to time; his diary is concerned with family matters, particularly with the financial difficulties of its members and with his unhappiness at his situation.]

Diary No. 106 missing

- Octavo Volume 81: Diary No. 107
Dates: 1858 June 27-1859 April 30
Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., Harrisburg, Pa. (7/21/58), Carlisle, Pa. (8/25/58), Chambersburg, Pa. (9/23/58), "Home, at Henri's, Phila.," Bethlehem, Pa. (12/29/58), Allentown, Pa. (1/19/59), Mauch Chunk, Pa. (2/15/59), and "Henri's Philad." (5/14/59).
Contents: [N's sales continue to consist mostly of "Lynch" and his own poems.] "*Henri recd. a Telegraphic dispatch from R. [Reginald] of his acquittal, in his trial on an indictment for manslaughter, for shooting Thompson, in Montgomery, Ala. a year ago.*" [June 28]; "*John has found a situation at Chickering Piano Fortes, Chestnut, St.*" [June 30]; "*Gave Rev. Morss a L. [Lynch] for his name!... *Took back Rev. Morss's Lynch*" [Sept. 14]; "*...and J. Cornman, 1 L. tow[ar]d a \$4. pr. cloth Gaiters, & paid him bal. cash, 50.— Copied Elizabeth's po[e]m 'Sab. Thots', for the Carlisle Herald—& examd. 'proof' of my 'H-bill', Louisa*" [Sept. 17]; "*Rose very late. Sick & prostrated and depressed in mind. No home!*" [Oct. 13]; Daughter Catharine offered N a place at her home while he was "*fitting out*" and Edgar invited him to spend the winter with him in Mauch Chunk. [Oct. 19]; [Gap in entries between Oct. 20, 1858-Jan. 1, 1859. According to cover of diary N goes to Henri in Philadelphia on Oct. 22, 1858 and leaves for Bethlehem on Dec. 29. After Oct. 20 entry Elizabeth Foster Mather writes on the blank pages on Aug. 3, 1873 from Hadlyme of the illness and death of her sister Antoinette. She writes also of the "*communications*" through a Mrs. Ewell touching on the future and words of her deceased father.]; continues to be unwell through winter spent at Edgar's—"Recd. letter from Gorton...advising me to go on to a *Planta[tion] to teach ; or to go up ye Hudson in ye Spring!*" [Mar.10]; receives a letter from Henri informing him of his wife's ill health and possible imminent death [Mar. 12]; "*My life is spent unpleasantly & unprofitably here. Oh, that I could find a pleasant, quiet & social "home", where there was intellectual & social enjoyment.*" [April 17]; "*Annie favors my going "Home"—Dear daughter! she does not seem to realize that I have no 'Home'"*" [April 20]
- Octavo Volume 82: Diary No. 108
Dates: 1859 May 1- 1860 April 8
Location(s): Mauch Chunk, Pa., Philadelphia, Pa. (5/14/59), East Haddam and Hadlyme, Conn. (7/16/59), and Philadelphia, Pa. (11/5/59).
Contents: [N sells pictures of Mt. Vernon from J. H. Byram & Co. Philadelphia]

spends 13 weeks at son Edgar's during which he is ill much of the time. In May he goes to Henri's where his wife is also in residence. Louisa still makes life miserable for him.—“*But my visit here is made very miserable by the hatred & hostility of the poor feeble old lady, once my dear & affectionate wife!*” [Aug. 20]; submits his poem “*The Sabbath*” to the East Haddam Journal [Sept. 27]; describes the near death of his wife [Nov. 28]; Louisa Foster dies [Dec. 9]; pens a detailed description of his wife's funeral service [Dec. 13]; attended the Presbyterian Church to hear Henri play on the “Great Organ” [Jan. 7]

- Octavo Volume 83: Additional Diary No. 109
[A Postscriptum.] + To Close
Dates: At Henri's, Philad[elphia]. May 1, 1860
From May 1st 1860
To *Grandpa's Last Diary*
Location(s): Philadelphia, Pa., Philadelphia at daughter Mary's (6/15/60), “Began living in Henri's & Con's in a large house, in Francis Street”
Contents: “*..But my Diary is not kept with so much precision & accuracy as formerly, since my severe sickness Dec. 1858 at Bethlehem, & till May 14th, 1859 in M. Chunk, when I came here (to Henri's)—and since my frequent illnesses, & great prostration of health*” [May 13]; [N seemingly from the moment of his wife's death, forgets all his complaints against her and grieves profusely over her passing.]; “*Paid Butler for printing 100 circulars; notices of my Po[e]ms*” [Sept. 18]; last entry is dated Oct. 22; Nathan Lanesford Foster died November 9, 1860

The blank pages of this diary were used by N's daughter, Elizabeth Louisa Foster Mather. The pages dated May 22, 1881-July 24, 1881 were used for short daily entries concerned with her daily, domestic activities. The diary, reversed, dated Dec. 12, 1879 was used for recording “*the thoughts which I see in print, which I like*”.

- Octavo Volume 84: Diary of Elizabeth Louisa Foster Mather
Dates: 1872 May 21-1879 January 31
Location(s):
Contents: Diary of domesticity— E. still writes poetry as she did when N wrote of it; she is also a needlewoman, probably professionally.
- Octavo Volume 85: Diary of Eizabeth Louisa Foster Mather
Dates: 1879 December 10-1882 January 19
Location(s):
Contents: Noted after May 22, 1881: “*This diary having been left at Katie's I used the leaves in Diary #109 of Pa's. I now resume at July 26 [1881]-Jan. 19, 1882*”

Manuscript Box

- Folder 1: Correspondence, etc., n.d.; 1840-1844
- Folder 2: Miscellaneous papers,
- Folder 3: Newsclippings, etc.
- Folder 4: Genealogical material and notes on collection
- Folder 5: Genealogical material (Foster and Cone families)
- Folder 6: Book dealer's description of collection
- Folders 7-8: Processor's Notes