

Abbott Family Papers, 1791-1910
S 974.423 P929a, Manuscript
1 Box

About the Collection

The Abbott Family Papers consist of the papers of **Cheney Abbott (1798-1873)** and his family. The Abbotts lived in the town of Prescott, one of the four towns destroyed by the building of the Quabbin Reservoir in the 1930s. The majority of the Abbotts included in this collection spent much of their lives in Prescott, but also later lived in Pelham, and Northfield, Massachusetts.

Cheney Abbott (1798-1873) was born in Brookfield, Massachusetts to **Zephaniah** and **Eunice Marble Abbott** in 1798. He married first, Rachel Chapin in 1827 in Prescott. She died in 1839. Together, they had three children that survived to adulthood: **Luther (1831-1920)**, **Milo (1833-1908)**, and **Rachel Ellen (1839-1863?)**. He married, second, **Pamelia White Thompson** in 1846. She died in 1887. Together, they had three children, **Cynthia (1847-1928)**, **Frederick (1849-1930)**, and **Eunice (1852-1924)**.

Cheney had various jobs throughout his life. In the 1820s, he was a schoolteacher in Prescott. He also ran a carding mill in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was also a town selectman for Prescott in 1856, in for Pelham in 1847. Cheney was a Justice of the Peace for Hampshire County from 1850-1857. Cheney was also a farmer.

He is represented in the collection with letters he wrote to his parents, receipts for various items and services, including taxes, newspaper subscriptions, doctor's bills, and general store merchandise. His papers also include letters of character involved with his teaching career, various legal documents that he either signed as witness, or was directly involved him. His papers also include his appointment as Justice of the Peace. Within his papers, are several items relating to the settlement of Edmund Horr's estate. Horr was a neighbor of Cheney.

Rachel Chapin Abbott (1809-1839), first wife of Cheney, is represented in the collection with poetry that she has either written or copied down. One poem is signed "Rachel Chapin." All three of Rachel Chapin Abbott's children are represented in the collection.

Luther Abbott (1831-1920), oldest son of Cheney, is represented by a power of attorney document he signed giving his brother Milo permission to act on his behalf in relation to property in Prescott. It is dated 1856.

Rachel Ellen Abbott (1839-1863?), oldest daughter of Cheney, was born in May of 1839. Her mother died in November of the same year. According to census records, Rachel was living with her father, step-mother, and siblings in 1850. She was not listed as part of Cheney's household in 1860. Her papers contain legal documents appointing Cheney as the Executor of her estate in 1863. At this time she was still listed as Rachel Ellen Abbott, indicating she was unmarried. She likely died sometime that year, but no gravestone or death record can be found.

Milo Wells Abbott (1833-1908), middle son of Cheney, married Cordelia E. Conkey in 1861. She was the daughter of Ansel and Nancy Conkey. Milo served as town selectman from 1873-1874. He lived in the house where Prescott's earliest tavern was kept by William Conkey. The tavern is the site where Daniel Shays first started organizing men for his rebellion. Milo and

Cordelia had four children, Nellie, Emma, Harry Wells, and Burt Chapin. Only Harry and Burt survived into adulthood.

Milo is represented in the collection by a quit claim deed signed over to his half-siblings, a deed of land from S.M. Conkey to Milo, and a Guardian Deed of Roswell Allen to Milo. Cordelia is represented by Conkey genealogical materials. Handwritten notes and lists trace several generations of Conkeys in Massachusetts.

Burt Chapin Abbott (1871-1945), son of Milo and Cordelia, was born in Prescott in 1871. He and his brother later moved to Northfield. He married Cora Lamson in 1893. They had four sons. He died in 1945, and is buried in Green River Cemetery in Greenfield. He is represented in the collection by a probate document appointing him as administrator of the estate of his mother, Cordelia, in 1910.

Pamelia White Thompson Abbott (1811-1887) was the second wife of Cheney. She was the widow of Peleg Thompson. With Cheney, she had three children, all of whom are represented in the collection.

Cynthia Abbott Reynolds (1847-1928) was the second oldest daughter of Cheney. She married Edwin Reynolds in 1877. They lived in Montague. Prior to her marriage to Edwin, she had a child, Bertha Sophia Abbott, in 1872 with an unidentified man.

Frederick Abbott (1849-1930) was the third son of Cheney. He married Cora Powers in 1881. They had one daughter. Frederick and his wife are buried in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Eunice Abbott Engram Bartlett (1852-1924) was the youngest daughter of Cheney. She married first, Alfred Engram in 1878. After his death, she married Willie Bartlett in 1893.

Pamelia and her three children are represented in several quit claim and land deeds between each other, dividing up land in Prescott. Eunice is additionally represented by a receipt dated 1887 for a coffin, presumably for her husband. Frederick is also represented by an indenture between him and Elmer Powers of New Salem, dated 1886. Cynthia is also represented by a letter from her Aunt Sophie.

Bertha Sophia Abbott Dean (1872-1943) was the illegitimate daughter of Cynthia Abbott. She married Merton R. Dean in Deerfield in 1905. She is buried in the Green River Cemetery in Greenfield. She is represented in the collection by an autograph book she owned. The book contains autographs and poems written by family and friends between 1880 and 1882.

Zephaniah Abbott (1769-1802) and **Eunice Marble Abbott Atkinson (1770-1844)** are the parents of Cheney. Zephaniah is the son of Joel and Judith Stevens Abbott. He was born in Brookfield, Massachusetts, where he married Eunice Marble in 1792. Together, they had four children. Eunice was the daughter of Jonathan and Anna Marble. Zephaniah was a farmer and cabinet maker. He and his family lived in Brookfield, Rutland, New Salem and finally Prescott. After the death of Zephaniah, Eunice married **John Atkinson (1776-1854)** in 1804.

Zephaniah is represented in the collection with a group of receipts dated from 1701-1802.

Eunice is represented in the collection with a few receipts during her widowhood, a letter dated 1802 from her brother Henry Marble, and a letter dated 1814 to her second husband John Atkinson.

John Atkinson is represented in the collection with letters from siblings, nieces, and acquaintances.

In addition to the above mentioned items, there is a folder of miscellaneous material included in the collection. This folder contains two recipes, one for a cure for dysentery, and one for blacking. Also, there is an unidentified receipt for goods, an autograph book for an unidentified Sophie Abbott, two poems, a note of apology from a bank, fragments of receipts, a letter to the Overseers of the Poor of Prescott, a blank form from the Hampshire Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and an Order of Exercises for a Festival of Saint John the Baptist in Amherst.

Folder List

1. Cheney Abbott—Letters to parents, 1816-1821
2. Cheney Abbott—Receipts, 1820-1871
3. Cheney Abbott—Papers, 1818-1858
4. Cheney Abbott—Edmund Horr Estate, 1847-1848
5. Rachel Chapin Abbott—Poetry, undated
6. Luther Abbott—Power of attorney, 1856
7. Rachel Ellen Abbott—Estate, 1863
8. Milo Wells Abbott—Papers, 1864, 1868, 1874
9. Conkey Family—Genealogy
10. Burt C. Abbott—Probate document, 1910
11. Pamela, Cynthia, Eunice, Frederick Abbott—Papers, 1877-1891
12. Bertha Sophia Abbott—Autograph book, 1880-1882
13. Zephaniah Abbott—Receipts, 1791-1802
14. Eunice Marble Abbott Atkinson—Papers, 1802-1814
15. John Atkinson—Papers, 1811-1843
16. Miscellaneous Material, undated