

## **Colton Family Papers (ca. 1810-ca. 1937)**

### **S 929.2 C725c Manuscript**

Gift of Maria and Roger Rogers

#### **Biographical Note**

The Colton family of Northfield, Massachusetts was one of the town's leading families in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Richard Colton and his wife Betsey came to Northfield in 1811. He would become a surveyor, a plow and wagon maker, a Deputy Sheriff, Justice of the Peace, County Commissioner, Coroner, a Representative in the Legislature, a Mason and a lawyer. The Coltons had 6 children, 4 boys (Eli, Alonzo, Edwin and Edward) and two girls (Eliza and Amanda). His daughters married into the Alexander family, one of the oldest Northfield families. One son, Edwin, would die at age 31. Alonzo eventually moves out of the area, while Eli and Edward remain.

Richard's youngest son, Edward Wells Colton would follow his father's example, becoming a surveyor, a civil engineer, a Justice of the Peace and a Mason. He married twice. His first wife was Susan Maxwell Heard of Boston. His second wife was Fanny Warriner of Brattleboro. He had four children, three with Susan and one with Fanny. Clayton Colton, his son with Fanny died as an infant. His oldest son, Everett Wells moved out west and became a salesman. His daughter Maria Heard married Newton Keet late in life and lived in Northfield. His second son, Joseph Richard became a businessman in Northfield.

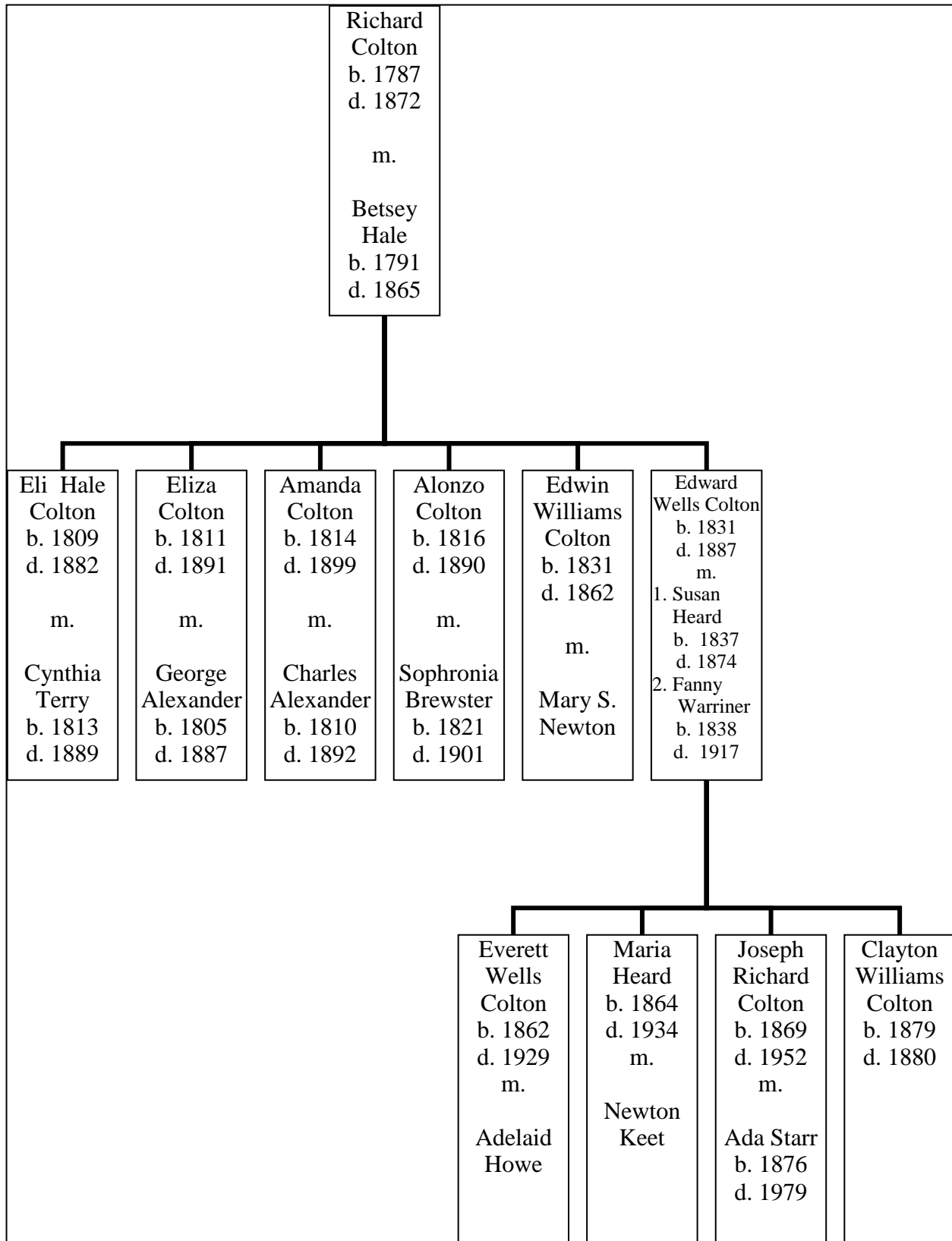
#### **Organization of the Collection**

The collection is sorted by individual. The bulk of the material belonged to Richard Colton. His materials consist of bills and receipts spanning seven decades of personal and business transactions; account books and ledgers from his various businesses; Deputy Sheriff and Justice of the Peace documents; legal paperwork; and miscellaneous papers. Account books and ledgers of Jeremiah Shea, and the firm Stratton & Phelps (who ran a general store) are here, along with other unidentified account books from the 1830s. Richard acquired these documents probably through his official jobs as Deputy Sheriff, lawyer, or Justice of the Peace.

The Edward Wells Colton material consist of courtship letters he wrote to his first wife, Susan Heard between 1859 and 1861, ceasing only a week before their wedding; surveying papers; some Justice of the Peace transactions; correspondence; and other miscellaneous documents. Papers and correspondence of Susan Heard and Fanny Warriner are also placed here.

The remainder of the collection consists of correspondence, photographs, miscellaneous writings, newspapers and books of various members Richard and Edward's families.

## Richard Colton Family Tree



## Container List

**Richard Colton**

Box	Folder	Description
1	1-3	Bills and Receipts, 1800-1819
	4-6	Bills and Receipts, 1820s
2	7	Bills and Receipts, 1820s
	8	Bills and Receipts, 1830s
	9	Bills and Receipts, 1840s
	10	Bills and Receipts, 1850s
	11	Bills and Receipts, 1860s
	12-13	Bills and Receipts, undated
	14	Miscellaneous receipt and letter fragments
	15	Board of County Commissioners-miscellaneous documents
3	16-17	Plough (Plow) Business papers, 1820s-1830s
	18	Coroner's Office-miscellaneous documents
	19	Account book-Coroner's accounts, miscellaneous transactions
	20	Account book, 1811-1817—plough making, repairing, wheel and wagon repairs, etc.
	21	Legal business ledger, ca. 1823-1848—accounts of Justice of the Peace, coroner, Lawyer, etc.
4	22	Miscellaneous receipt and account books, 1830s
	23	Unidentified Account book, 1830s
	24	Northfield Lyceum account book, 1829-1830
	25	Account book of Jeremiah Shea, 1830s-1840s
	26	Stratton & Phelps account book, 1829-1830
	27	Stratton & Phelps "Invoice Book," 1830s
	28	Stratton & Phelps receipt books, 1829-1830
	29	Stratton & Phelps Bills and Receipts, 1829-1831
5	30-31	Legal Business-miscellaneous documents
	32	Twitchell Correspondence, 1856

	33	William Brooks and family, miscellaneous documents
	34	Estate of Simeon L. Spafford, 1850s
	35	Wills of Richard Colton and Charity Terry
	36	Nathan Prindles case
6	37	Military pensions-laws and regulations
	38	Military pensions-Miller family
	39	Military pensions-A. Perkins
	40	Military pensions-Sarah Woodard
	41	Estate of Sarah Woodard
	42	Military pensions-miscellaneous correspondence
	43-44	Railroad-miscellaneous papers including two railroad maps
	45	Franklin Mutual Fire Insurance Company policies
	46	Miscellaneous fire insurance policies
	47	Miscellaneous fire insurance documents
	48	Northfield School district-miscellaneous documents
	49	Legal publications-miscellaneous— <i>Citizen's edition of the New National Tax Law; Twelfth Annual Report of the ... State Lunatic Hospital at Taunton, 1865; General Laws, 1850; Important to all County Officers in the United States ...</i>
	50	Advertisements-miscellaneous
7	51-52	Justice of the Peace-miscellaneous papers
	53-55	Deputy Sheriff-miscellaneous papers
8	56-57	Sheriff Epaphras Hoyt bonds, executed in Northfield
	58	Land leases and transactions
	59	Unitarian Church-miscellaneous documents
	60	Northfield Lyceum correspondence
	61	Political correspondence
	62	Masonic correspondence
	63	Personal correspondence, 1828-1857
	64-65	Miscellaneous correspondence

9	66	Newspapers— <i>Greenfield Gazette</i> , Nov. 8, 1825; <i>Greenfield Gazette &amp; Franklin Herald</i> , May 3, 1831; <i>Franklin Mercury</i> , Oct. 4, 1834; <i>Greenfield Gazette &amp; Franklin Herald</i> , Nov. 4, 1834; <i>Supplement to the Courant</i> , Jan. 31, 1846; <i>Hartford Daily Courant</i> , Sept. 12, 1851; <i>Boston Daily Journal</i> , Aug. 22, 1861; <i>Supplement to the Daily Morning Chronicle</i> , Dec. 6, 1865; <i>Christian Register</i> , Jan. 21, 1865; <i>Journal of Industry</i> , Nov. 27, 1871
	67-69	Miscellaneous papers
Oversize 1	--	Surveying papers; pocket case; day book, 1850-1855 containing accounts for surveying, lumber, general work, sundries, personal loans, etc.; surveying notebook, 1834-1839; surveying notebook, 1837; surveying notebook, 1840; surveying notebook, 1841; surveying notebook, undated; 2 unidentified books filled with (surveying?) symbols.
Oversize 2	--	Justice of the Peace ledgers (2); General account books (2) covering all types of work-farm work, plowing, etc.; Rufus Stratton account book, 1832; Unidentified day books (3) dated 1820, 1826, and 1831 (may or may not belong to Richard Colton)

### Edward Wells Colton

Box	Folder	Description
10	70	Courtship correspondence with Susan Heard, Nov. 1859-April 1860
	71	Courtship correspondence with Susan Heard, May-Nov. 1860
	72	Courtship correspondence with Susan Heard, Nov. 1860-April 1861
	73	Courtship correspondence with Susan Heard, May 1861-August 1861, 1869
	74	Susan Heard Colton documents and correspondence, misc.
	75	John J. Heard Correspondence with Susan Heard, 1860
	76	Invitations-Mrs. Fanny Warriner Colton, 1899
	77	Photographs of Edward, Susan, and Fanny Colton
	78	Marriage Certificates, 1861, 1877
	79	Family Correspondence, 1850-1854
	80	Family Correspondence, 1855-1856
11	81	Family Correspondence, 1857-1881, undated
	82	Miscellaneous documents
	83	Surveyor documents

	84	Justice of the Peace papers
	85	Business Correspondence
	86	Letters of reference and teaching credentials, 1850-1858
	87	Life Insurance Policies
	88	Deeds
	89	Receipts, misc.
12	--	Edward Wells Colton diaries, 1858 (brief daily entries, mostly of weather and general activities, but has notes and accounts at back of book; also covers his trip to St. Louis); 1861 (short daily entries containing weather reports and daily tasks, includes his marriage to Susan Heard); 1862 (short daily entries through August; does not write about death of twin brother, or birth of first child, though all entries cease after the birth); 1863 (brief daily entries, mostly of farm work, little mention of War); 1867 (a few entries dealing with farming, but diary is mostly blank); 1868 (diary is about half full of entries, with most coming in the spring and summer, mostly entries on farm work); 1874 (a <i>Farmer's Almanac</i> interweaved with blank sheets that Colton uses to describe weather conditions and record transactions, no mention of his wife's death); 1876 (a <i>Farmer's Almanac</i> interweaved with blank sheets that Colton uses as a combination weather diary and account book, half of the pages are blank); Account book, 1858-1874, including a list of Susan Colton's clothing following her death; Notebook, 1859-1877, including meeting notes from Sunday School Teachers' Meetings; Account with Windsor L. Fay, 1863; Account with Windsor L. Fay, 1861-1863; <i>The Lady's Almanac</i> for 1859 1860, and 1862, belonging to Susan Heard Colton, who kept a one-line diary entry in them for the year. She mostly references weather and daily chores and outings.
13	90	Music of Fanny Colton
	91	Recipes and Remedies kept by family of Edward Colton pasted into book of Edward's school attendance records
	92	Newspapers— <i>Leffel's Illustrated Mechanical News Supplement</i> , no date; <i>Gazette and Courier</i> , May 5, 1862; <i>Gazette and Courier</i> , June 2, 1862; <i>Harper's Weekly Supplement</i> , Dec. 17, 1881; and five newspapers clippings

**Everett Wells Colton—son of Edward Wells Colton**

Box	Folder	Description
13	93	Miscellaneous correspondence
	94	Photograph of Everett Wells Colton

**Joseph Richard Colton—son of Edward Wells Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
13	95	Miscellaneous receipts
	96	Photographs of Joseph, Ada, and Florence Colton
	97	Business cards and letterheads
	98	Mortgages and deeds, 1898-1937
	99	Letter from daughter Florence, 1906
	100	Miscellaneous business correspondence, 1880-1910
	101	Advertisements
	102	Book belonging to Mrs. Ada Starr Colton

**Maria Colton Keet—daughter of Edward Wells Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
13	103	Miscellaneous correspondence
	104	Photograph of Maria Colton Keet
	105	Invitations to Mr. & Mrs. Newton and Maria Keet, 1882-1926

**Daniel Colton—brother of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
13	106	Miscellaneous correspondence
	107	Photograph of Daniel Colton

**Ezra Colton—brother of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
13	108	Letters to siblings

**Eliza Colton Alexander—daughter of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	109	Miscellaneous papers
	110	Photographs of George and Eliza Alexander

**Amanda Colton Alexander—daughter of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	111	Calling cards of extended family and friends
	112	Calling card holder
	113	Photographs of Charles, Amanda, and daughter Edda Alexander
	114	Invitations to Mr. & Mrs. Charles and Amanda Alexander, 1828-1899

**Alonzo Colton—son of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	115	Family Correspondence
	116	Miscellaneous correspondence
	117	Society for the Prevention of Fruit Stealing
	118	Photographs of Alonzo and Sophronia Colton
	119	Journals-1842, 1851
	120	Journal-Jan. 16, 1843-June 24, 1844
	121	Essays and miscellaneous writings
	122	Writings of Sophronia Colton

**Eli Colton—son of Richard Colton**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	123	Miscellaneous correspondence

**Fidelia Heard—step-mother of Susan Heard Colton (wife of Edward Wells Colton)**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	124	Correspondence with Colton family
	125	Photograph of Fidelia Heard

**Persis Reed—half-sister to Fidelia Heard**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
14	126	Photograph of Persis Reed
	127	Correspondence and miscellaneous documents



**Barber family—family of Richard Colton's sister Nancy**

Box	Folder	Description
14	128	Correspondence with Colton family

**Hale family—family of Betsey Colton (wife of Richard Colton)**

Box	Folder	Description
15	129	Correspondence with Colton family

**Colton family**

Box	Folder	Description
15	130	Miscellaneous photographs—George Colton (nephew of Richard Colton); Fanny Colton and friends outside of Northfield house; Cyanotype of house with four people in front; Whitmore wedding picnic party; Willard James Parker (foster brother of J.R. Colton)
	131	Miscellaneous correspondence
	132	Misc. Programs—The Great Mock Court Trial, 1895; Northfield Seminary Commencement 1921; Fourth Annual Concert of the Northfield Choral Society, 1914; Order of Exercises, Rowe St. Sabbath School Society, 26 <sup>th</sup> annual meeting, no date.
	133	History of Northfield House, by Priscilla Colton Carroll
	134	Miscellaneous poetry and writings
	135	Recipes and remedies of various sorts
	136	Catalog of Colton family library
	137	Unidentified Invitations
	138	Schoolbooks—three unidentified copy books; incomplete arithmetic book; copy book belonging to Williams Colton; register of students from 1837-38; notebook used by Wells Colton to track students, formerly used by Williams Colton.
	139	Miscellaneous books— <i>The Geological History of the Conn. Valley</i> by Miller; <i>Plant Food</i> ; <i>Ladies' Companion and Literary Expositor</i> , Aug. 1844; <i>Winchester's Book-Keeping</i> .
	140	Children's books— <i>The Little Child's Book</i> ; <i>Aunt Friendly's Colored Picture Book</i> , <i>Poor Cock Robin</i> ; <i>Little Lays for Little Folks</i> ; <i>Puss in Boots</i> .

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Northfield, Mass. postcards—Conn. River in East Northfield; Northfield Seminary; View from Round Top; Bennett's Meadow Ferry; East Northfield-below campus; The Old Ferry, Mount Hermon; Main Street-Northfield, copyright 1905; Main Street-Northfield, to Mrs. Rogers; Main Street looking North from Town Hall; Main Street-copyright 1902, color; Residence of W.R. Moody; Congregational Church; Seminary Farm; Cyanotype of 3 story building; Henry Moore Cottage; Revell Cottage; Home of D.L. Moody; Round Top; Merriman Cottage; First Congregational Unitarian Church; Birnam House; Belcher Fountain; S.H. Wing; Railroad Station; Town Hall; Main Street with storefront; Webster Block; S.H. Wing, side view; Cement Block Garage; Cement Block Garage with store in front; George N. Kidder; Geo. N. Kidder main floor; Geo. N. Kidder 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.