

# Old Letters Project

## Finding Aid

Windsor Historical Society  
96 Palisado Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095

**Creator:** various authors and donors

**Dates:** 1794-1907, bulk dates 1820-1840

**Extent:** 2 notebooks containing 104 documents

### Scope and Contents

The Old Letters Project is an artificial collection of about 100 pieces of correspondence held in the Windsor Historical Society collections. Although the source and provenance of these letters has not been determined, the documents apparently came to the Society from a variety of sources. The collection is predominately personal correspondence; perhaps one fifth pertains to business or legal matters. The letters were written between 1794 and 1907 with the bulk of the collection dated between 1820 and 1840.

Approximately one half of the collection is comprised of letters between members of the Ellsworth family of Windsor, Connecticut, including David Ellsworth (1741-1821) and his son David (1782-1867) and wife Alma Gillespie Ellsworth (d.1831), their daughters Mary Ann and Phebe Lyman Ellsworth, and other extended family members. A few of the Ellsworth family letters have simple transcripts. Family, school, and church news; travel; concern for Jabez Gillespie on the ship *Garonda*; and the price of goods in New York are some of the topics discussed.

Another one fifth of the collection is associated with the Hayden family of Windsor, including a few pieces of correspondence between Nathaniel W. Hayden and John Mason Loomis. Other family surnames in the collection are Allen, Clapp, Clark, Ellsworth, Filer, Fyler, Gaylord, Gibbs, Gillespie, Griswold, Halsey, Harris, Hayden, Hoadley, Howard, Kellogg, Loomis, Lyman, Mather, Morrison, Niles, Perkins, Phylar, Remington, and Stiles.

### Arrangement

The Old Letters Project documents are arranged in no particular order. Each letter was placed in an archival protective sleeve, assigned a sequential identification number, and filed in legal size loose-leaf notebooks.

An index has been prepared for the collection in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Descriptive fields include the document number, recipient's name, city, state, date, author's name, city, and state.

### Related Collections at Windsor Historical Society

Collections of family letters and business correspondence may also be found in these Windsor Historical Society collections:

- Hayden Collection, 1984.6

- Sarah Fowler Hayden Papers, 2009.44
- Hudson and Loomis Family Papers, 2005.8
- Holcomb Family Papers, 2011.48
- Harriet Cooke Nelson Collection, 2006.40
- Kibbe/Sipple Correspondence, 1986.14
- Charles D. Perry Papers, 2009.39
- Old Document Project

### **Subject Terms**

Ellsworth family  
Gillespie family  
Hayden family  
Loomis family  
Stiles, Henry Reed, 1832-1909  
Windsor (Conn.) – Social life and customs

### **Administrative History**

The Old Letters Project was assembled by Windsor Historical Society staff in the late 1990s. They were assisted by a group of Loomis Chaffee School students who created the original chart of identifying information. In September 2010, a group of volunteers participating in the United Way Day of Caring verified much of the abstracted information and entered the data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Other Society volunteers including Willa Nemetz and Sandra McGraw continued to edit and complete the database during the following year. The finding aid was prepared by Barbara Goodwin in March 2012.