

Shelton Family Collection

Finding Aid

Windsor Historical Society
96 Palisado Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095

Creators: William Shelton (1805-1860), and Henry C. Shelton (1838-1909)

Dates: 1828-1914, 1942

Extent: 2.5 linear feet

Accession #: 1996.34, 1997.20

Biographical/Historical Note

William R. Shelton (1805–1860), builder and resident of the Shelton House located at 40 Pleasant St. in Windsor, owned a hat-making company in the 1830s until the 1850s. Working with his business partner Walter Pease, Pease & Shelton—later, known just as the William Shelton Company—he made hats from otter, beaver, and nutria (a South American animal similar to beaver) for dealers in New England, New York, and Philadelphia. William Shelton married Frances Buckland (1810–1855) and had nine children, seven of whom lived to adulthood.

A large portion of this collection deals with their third living son, Henry Clay Shelton (1838–1909). Their eldest son, William C. Shelton (1829–) enlisted on December 17, 1851 at the age of 23 in the U.S. Army, and was discharged for ‘ordinary disability’ five years later at Fort Ridgely in Minnesota. Their daughter Lucy A. Shelton (1836–1892) married Samuel C. Loomis, a local blacksmith, in the late 1850s. After the death of his wife, William R. Shelton lived with the Loomis family until his death in 1860. The Loomises also boarded Shelton’s second son George (1830–1890), who worked as a farmer and fisherman. Much business correspondence links the Shelton and Loomis families. The letters of Jeannette Shelton, daughter of Lucy and Samuel Loomis, to her husband Lodewick Hudson, can also be found in this collection. They married in 1884 and had three children. Their eldest son, Ralph Hudson (1887–1967) worked as the Director of the School of Religious Work at Yale University before he was drafted in 1917, spending part of WWI in France. He married Dorothea D. Curtis in 1920, and resided in Iowa, Pennsylvania, and Florida before his death in 1967. See the brief biographical outline below for more details.

Henry C. Shelton lived in New Haven, Connecticut for the majority of his life. In 1860, Henry Clay Shelton became the guardian of his younger sister Flora I. Shelton until she reached adulthood in 1869. He was enlisted into Company A of the 27th Infantry Regiment of the GAR on October 3, 1862, and mustered out on July 27, 1863. He achieved the rank of Sergeant. As a civilian, Henry C. Shelton ran and invested in several businesses, although his profession on the federal census is consistently listed as "accountant." It is unclear when the Henry C. Shelton and Co., run with partners

Henry J. Turner, Charles T. Ward, and Aaron E. Platt, was created, but record of the company spans several decades. According to *Greenough, Jones & Co.'s New Haven (Conn.) Directory of 1874-1875*, the company sold a variety of items, including "cigars, tobacco, and Yankee notions." In the 1880s, Shelton took part in the failed business venture to begin the National Manufacturing Company in New Haven, which aimed to manufacture, buy, and sell machinery and machinists' and mechanics' tools. He purchased 20 shares or 21% of the company in 1881, increased to 70 shares or 23% as the company grew in August of 1884. In 1885, however, the National Manufacturing Company was declared insolvent, and all property was transferred to a Robert A. Brown. In 1886, Henry Clay Shelton applied for a patent for an improvement on a 'Clothes-Drier' machine, which he was granted by the United States Patent and Trademark Office on February 1, 1887. A description of his invention can be found in the *Official Gazette of the USPTO*, Vol. 38, page 500. In 1891, he went into business with his nephew Lodewick Hudson and a J. M. Fairfield, and managed Hudson & Company, which manufactured and sold Shellac Varnish in Windsor, Connecticut. In 1907, Henry Clay Shelton served as executor of the estate of Francis E. Spencer, relation unknown. Henry died in New Haven on October 25, 1909.

William R. Shelton (September 4, 1805 – July 2, 1860)

Frances Buckland Shelton (July 4, 1810 – October 22, 1855)

- William C. Shelton (1829 –)
- George Shelton (August 7, 1830 – January 19, 1890)
- Charlotte A. (Shelton) Alderman (1832 – August 20, 1854)
- Charles Shelton (1834 –)
- Henry Clay Shelton (May 22, 1838 – October 25, 1909)
- Lucy A. (Shelton) Loomis (July 3, 1836 – January 27, 1892)
- Arthur W. Shelton (1842 – September 28, 1853)
- Frances Shelton (May 1845 – September 8, 1848)
- Flora I. (Shelton) Crawford (1848 – October 1, 1888)

Lucy A. Shelton (July 3, 1836 – Jan 27. 1892)

Samuel C. Loomis (April 20, 1831 – June 14, 1876)

- Jeannette (Loomis) Hudson (1862 –)
- Helen Loomis (1870 –)

Jeanette Loomis (1862 –)

Lodewick Hudson (December 1859 –)

m. 1884

- Ralph S. Hudson (October 29, 1887 – August, 1967)
- Lester W. Hudson (July 1889 –)
- Helen L. Hudson (June 1895 –)

Scope and Contents

The bulk of materials in this collection are business papers including account books, business correspondence, and receipts. There are also photographs, personal correspondence, newspaper clippings, a collection of jokes, and official documents pertaining to the Shelton family.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into two series, the first of which pertains to William R. Shelton, and the second to his son Henry Clay Shelton and family. Series I is organized chronologically, and Series II is organized thematically.

Series I. William R. Shelton Papers

Subseries A. Account Books & Papers

Subseries B. Business Papers

Series II. Henry C. Shelton and Family Papers

Series III. Photographs and Objects

Box and Folder Lists

Series I. William R. Shelton Papers

Subseries A. Account Books & Papers

- 1.1 Business Letters and Notes, undated
- 1.2 Account Book & Paper, includes 1828 inventory for the William Shelton Company, 1828-1829
- 1.3 Account Book, 1830-1833
- 1.4 Account Papers, 1830
- 1.5 Account Papers, 1831
- 1.6 Account Papers, 1832
- 1.7 Day Book, 1833-1834
- 1.8 Account Papers, 1833
- 1.9 Account Papers, includes business correspondence, 1834
- 1.10 Account Papers, includes business correspondence, 1835
- 1.11 Account Book, 1835-1838
- 1.12 Account Book, 1847-1854
- 1.13 Farmer & Mechanics Bank Book, 1848-1855
- 1.14 Account Book, Chas. Scott, Henry C. Shelton & T. I. Driggs, Trustees, Franklin Scott Estate, 1872-1909

Subseries B. Business Papers

- 2.1 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1836-1837
- 2.2 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1838-1839
- 2.3 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1840
- 2.4 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1841
- 2.5 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1842
- 2.6 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1843
- 3.1 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1844
- 3.2 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1845
- 3.3 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1846
- 3.4 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1847
- 3.5 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1848
- 4.1 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1849

- 4.2 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1850
- 4.3 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1851-1852
- 4.4 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1853-1855
- 4.5 Business Papers, bills, letters, and receipts, 1856-1861

Series II. Henry C. Shelton and Family Papers

- 4.6 Correspondence - Henry C. Shelton, personal and business letters, invitations, and undated calling cards, 1871-1924, undated
- 4.7 Correspondence – Jeannette and Lodewick Hudson, letters with envelopes before and after their marriage, 1878-1884, undated
- 4.8 Correspondence – Hudson Family, including letters from S. C. Loomis to his daughter Jennie, Jennie to her children, Ralph and Helen Hudson, and a copy of the Second Annual Report of the Woman’s Board of Missions, 1876-1942, undated
- 5.1 Business Papers – Henry C. Shelton, bills, letters, and receipts, 1847-1907, undated
- 5.2 Assets, Brokers, and Investments for the Henry C. Shelton Co., including annual statements, letters, and bills, 1870-1904
- 5.3 Papers for the National Manufacturing Co., including receipts, legal documents, bills, and correspondence, 1881-1886
- 5.4 Estate of Francis E. Spencer, bills, receipts, legal documents, and correspondence, 1866-1907 (bulk 1907)
- 5.5 Scott Family Papers, correspondence with Charles Scott and Scott family, bills and documents concerning Scott estate, 1874-1904
- 5.6 Legal documents, concerning guardianship of Flora I. Shelton, court proceedings, dog licenses (he owned several dogs, and corresponded repeatedly concerning their training, health, and skills), Hudson & Co. contract, probate court documents from the estate of Lucy A. Loomis and for Charles W. Shelton, last will & testament for H. C. Shelton, patent application (draft) for H. C. Shelton, 1869-1906
- 5.7 Day Diary, presumed to be owned by Henry C. Shelton, 1868
- 5.8 Bank Book, 1904
- 5.9 Jokes and Newspaper Clippings, 1880, undated
- 5.10 Photographs, including of H. C. Shelton & Co., H. C. Shelton, Hudson House, Helen Hudson, Windsor, CT (some taken by Ralph Hudson), and baby photos, 1857, 1904, undated
- 5.11 Penmanship practice, unknown author, undated

Series III. Photographs and Objects

- 1997.20.2 Eleven daguerreotypes – (1) Framed portrait of "Uncle William Shelton" (2) 2 sided framed portrait of unidentified young man – a relative of William Shelton, or William Shelton as a young man (3) Brass framed portrait of a young man (4) Framed portrait of a young woman (5) Framed portrait of a young woman wearing a lace cap (6) Brass framed portrait of a young man (8) Brass and bakelite (?) thermos plastic framed portrait of young boy (9) Brass

- and leather bound framed portrait of an elderly woman (10) Brass framed portrait of a woman (11) Leather bound, velvet lined, broken, 2 sided framed portrait of a mother and baby
- 1996.34.2 Clothing – two piece dress (long paneled skirt with ruffles at hemline, dark blue and gray silk, top of matching fabric with lay overlay on collar and shoulders and bodice, black beadwork)
- 1996.34.3 Hats – five ladies hats (brown silk with green velvet; brown velvet with grosgrain band and bow; brown straw with brown velvet trim, rosebuds and leaves; navy blue crown with black brim; navy blue straw with blue and cream trim)
- 1996.34.5 Feather mattress

Related Materials in Windsor Historical Society

Subject files:

- Hatters
- Shelton Family File
- Loomis Family File
- Houses, Pleasant Street, 40, William Shelton
- Hudson, Ralph S. Collection

Subject Terms

Hudson, Jeannette (Loomis) (1862 –)
 Hudson, Lodewick (December 1859 –)
 Loomis, Lucy A (Shelton) (1836 – 1892)
 Shelton, Henry C. (1838-1909)
 Shelton, William R. (1805-1860)
 New Haven, Conn.
 Windsor, Conn.

Custodial History

The majority of materials found in this Shelton Family Collection were donated to Windsor Historical Society by Nancy Matthew Swain in 1997, with the rest donated by Paul and Anna Marie Doherty in 1996. Materials were accessioned by Rachel Friedman and Barbara Goodwin in 2005 and 2008 respectively and initially organized into two separate collections. The collection was processed and this finding aid written by Kathryn Angelica in 2017.