Bedortha Family Collection

Finding Aid

Windsor Historical Society
96 Palisado Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095

Creator: Bedortha Family, L. L. Bedortha
Dates: 1863-1897, undated
Extent: 1 linear foot
Accession #: 2013.66

Biographical/Historical Note

Laurence Loomis Bedortha (1837–1926) established and ran the Bedortha Mill on Mill Brook in Windsor for the majority of his life. A resident of Windsor, Connecticut from his birth in 1837 to his death in 1926, Bedortha was a lifelong and notable member of the town. The mills along Mill Brook served as the nexus of all economic activity in the area, and Bedortha Mill operated for nearly a century. Originally a wheelwright shop, the bulk of manufacturing ultimately included the blocks for rolling cigars, cutting tools for cigars, blocks for meat cutters, and the manufacturer of levels. Many of the photographs and glass plate negatives featured in this collection include images of dams, bridges, and landscapes near the Bedortha Mill. At his death at the age of 89, Laurence Loomis Bedortha was the oldest member of the Washington Lodge (Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons) of Windsor, CT and was believed to be one of the oldest Masons in Connecticut. Widowed in 1886, he had two sons and one daughter. He is buried in Palisado Cemetery in Windsor, CT.

His sons Alfred Calvin Bedortha (1872–1963) and George Quartus Bedortha (1874–1962) continued work at the Bedortha mill until their deaths in the mid-1960s. Unable to continue operation, the mill was demolished in 1963. Notably, machinery from the mill developed by Arthur H. Eddy, inventor and founder of the Eddy Electric Corporation, was donated to the Smithsonian Institute. Their sister, Clara R. Bedortha (1876–1972), also lived in Windsor until her death. Neither George nor Clara married, and both are buried in the Palisado Cemetery with the Bedortha family. In 1916 Alfred C. Bedortha married Grace (Roberts) Bedortha (1885–), who worked as a school teacher, and they had four children together. He is buried in Elm Grove Cemetery in Windsor, CT.

The following is a brief genealogy of the Bedortha family in Windsor:

Quartus Bedortha (1808-1879)
Ruth Loomis (June 4, 1811–Dec 30, 1896)
  m. February 28, 1832
    • Laurence Loomis Bedortha (Aug 16, 1837-1926)
    • Agnes Bedortha (April 8, 1844 –)

Laurence Loomis Bedortha (Aug 16, 1837–May 19, 1926)
Letitia Smith (~1842 – April 11, 1886)
m. January 10, 1871
• Alfred Calvin Bedortha (1872–1963)
  m. Grace R. (Roberts) Bedortha, (~1885–) on October 7, 1916
    o Margaret G. Bedortha (~1919–)
    o M. Bedortha (~1923–)
    o Ruth Roberts Bedortha (~1925–2013)
• George Quartus Bedortha (~1874–1962)
• Clara Ruth Bedortha (1876–1972)

Scope and Contents
The Bedortha Family Collection consists of mostly visual materials, including glass plate negatives and photographs of Bedortha family members and friends, and of the local area. The collection also includes a pocket diary, correspondence, and advertisements belonging to L. L. Bedortha, as well as information concerning photography.

Arrangement
This collection is organized by material type.

Series I. Papers
Series II. Images
  Subseries A: Glass Plate Negatives
  Subseries B: Photographs

Box and Folder Lists
Series I. Papers
Box 1, Folder 1
Bedortha Family Papers, including a letter written to A. C. Bedortha from Pennsylvania State College, September 19, 1896; Pocket Diary of L. L. Bedortha, 1863; Bedortha Brothers Advertisements; and L. L. Bedortha stationery, instructions on how to use Nepera Bromide Paper, 1896, blank sheets of bromide paper wrapped in black paper; 1863-1896, undated.

Series II. Images
Subseries A. Glass Plate Negatives
Boxes 2 and 3
2013.66.1 L.L. Bedortha reading in a wicker chair, undated
2013.66.2 machinery, inside of a mill, undated
2013.66.3 man in house in front of clock, undated
2013.66.4 woman in house in front of clock, undated (envelope dated 1902)
2013.66.5 landscape, path through the woods, undated
2013.66.6 landscape, river in woods with tree fallen across it, undated
2013.66.7 African American family and dog sitting outside a cabin with man playing the banjo, undated
2013.66.8 L. L. Bedortha sitting on porch, undated
2013.66.9 L. L. Bedortha sitting in wicker chair, undated
2013.66.10 man with glasses sitting on porch reading (A. C. Bedortha?), undated
2013.66.11 woman in bonnet standing outdoors, undated
2013.66.12  man watering a horse, undated
2013.66.13  man standing near fireplace, undated
2013.66.14  landscape, trees near a bank, one tree fallen, undated
2013.66.15  woman in bonnet with bicycle, undated
2013.66.16  woman reading in wicker chair, undated
2013.66.17  horses in front of house, undated
2013.66.18  landscape, plowed field with trees in distance, undated
2013.66.19  palm frond plants (trees?) in front of fence, undated
2013.66.20  baby alligators (?), undated
2013.66.21  fish tank, undated
2013.66.22  plowed field with fence and houses/cabins in distance, undated
2013.66.23  landscape, partially logged woods, undated
2013.66.24  fish tank, undated
2013.66.25  Stringing tobacco, 2 sec 66 carbul ortho 27, Hazy Bright, August 21, 1894, 5 o'clock
2013.66.26  Bedortha’s Tobacco Field, Allen on the Wagon, carbul ortho 27, carbul eikon and hydrodenlope, 2 sec d.16, August 21, 1894, 5:50 pm
2013.66.27  Gathering tobacco on the hill, haze 2 sec, d64, Ortho plate 27, plate in the holder glass to the lens by mistake, August 27, 1894
2013.66.28  Bedortha’s Tobacco Shed on the Hill, August 27, 1894
2013.66.29  weir in S. H. Barber’s Lot, N. W. Hayden, June 1, 1896, about 9 a.m.
2013.66.30  weir in woods below Barber’s Dam, N. W. Hayden, June 1, 1896, about 2 p.m.
2013.66.31  weir in woods below Barber’s Dam, N.W. Hayden, June 1, 1896, about 2 p.m.
2013.66.32  weir in G. M. Wrisley’s lot, front full, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.33  weir near Barber’s Dam, front full, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.34  weir in G. M. Wrisley’s lot, back empty, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.35  weir at Barber’s pond, back empty, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.36  weir in G. M. Wrisley’s lot, front empty, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.37  weir at Barber’s Pond, front empty, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.38  weir in G. M. Wrisley’s lot, back full, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.39  weir near Barber’s Dam, back full, about November 3, 1896
2013.66.40  plug in 10” gate in Barber’s Dam, gate closed, January 9, 1897
2013.66.41  plug in 10” gate in Barber’s Dam, water running, January 9, 1897
2013.66.42  weir board 4’ drove on edge, September 6, 1897
2013.66.43  weir at Barber’s pond, 3’ board, September 25, 1897
2013.66.44  weir in G. M. Wrisley’s lot, 6’ board, September 25, 1897

Subseries B: Photographs & Portraits
Box 1, Folder 2
2013.66.45  house and yard with white fence, undated
2013.66.46  landscape, hillside with tree stump, undated
2013.66.47  tree in front of house and fence, undated
2013.66.48 people in canoes on a river, undated
2013.66.49 pond in winter, man in the background, undated
2013.66.50 square building with ‘watch tower,’ undated
2013.66.51 cyanotype, three men picking tobacco, house on a hill in background, undated
2013.66.52 cyanotype, three men picking tobacco, house on a hill in background, undated
2013.66.53 cyanotype, man driving tobacco wagon in field, house on a hill in background, undated
2013.66.54a cyanotype, man driving tobacco wagon in field, house on a hill in background, ‘baked H. H.,” undated
2013.66.54b cyanotype, man driving tobacco wagon in field, house on a hill in background, undated
2013.66.55 weir in woods below Barber’s dam, N.W. Hayden, June 1, 1896, about 2 p.m.
2013.66.56 weir in woods below Barber’s dam, N.W. Hayden, June 1, 1896, about 2 p.m.
2013.66.57 wood post (weir up close?), undated
2013.66.58 wood post (weir up close?), undated
2013.66.59 family seated outside of wood cabins, man playing banjo, undated
2013.66.60 landscape, partially logged woods, undated

Box 1, Folder 3
2013.66.61 Ma Rockwell and Holin, C. M. Marsh Photographer, N. Y., undated
2013.66.63 Laura Loomis, Kellogg Photographer, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.64 James L. Loomis, Cartes De Viste by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.65 Agnes Bedortha, Cartes De Viste by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.66 R. H. Tuttle, B. S. De Lamater, Photographer, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.67 P. L. Rockwell, C. M. Marsh Photographer, Canandaigua, N.Y., undated
2013.66.68 George Rockwell, C. M. Marsh Photographer, Canandaigua, N.Y., undated
2013.66.69 Man with glasses and robe (clergy?), Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.70 Mother of Eli Francis, N.A. & R.A. Moore Photographers, undated
2013.66.71 Nancy E. Reynolds, Cartes De Viste by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.72 Joseph Bedortha, Marshall Photographer, Boston, M.A., undated
2013.66.73 Rhoda Bumsted and Julia Akford, Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.74 Arthur Mills, Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.75 Harriet Mills, Cartes de Viste by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.76 Pliney Holcomb, Chase’s Photograph Rooms, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.77 Edward Loomis, Cartes de Viste by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.78 Julia Loomis Holcomb, Chase’s Photograph Rooms, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.79 Woman with embroidered bow sitting near table, Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.80 Gertrude Waterman, S. H. Waite’s, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.81 Baby, 1-2 years, Fred E. North Photographer, undated
2013.66.82  Julia Waterman, S. H. Waite's, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.84  Miss L. E. Stins, Bundy Photographer, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.85  Fannie Leonard, Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.86  Man with bowtie in tasseled chair, Ingraham Brothers, Northampton, M.A., undated
2013.66.87  Man in tasseled chair, Prescott & Gage, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.88  Man in tasseled chair, Prescott & Gage, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.89  Mrs. Rockwood, Mother of Mrs. French, M. Moutthrop, New Haven, C.T., undated
2013.66.90  Mrs. A. Reynolds, James Reynolds’s Mother, D. W. Wilson Photographer, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.91  Man with small table, April 1885
2013.66.92  Man with goatee, Ingraham Brothers, Northampton, M.A., undated
2013.66.93  Elizabeth Francis, Cartes de Visite by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.94  Capt. A. D. French, Prescott & Gage, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.95  Mrs. Raymond, S. Parmelee, Windsor Locks, C.T., undated
2013.66.96  Henry A. Goodale, Cartes de Visite by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.97  Mrs. A. D. French, Cartes de Visite by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.98  Atherton, Kellogg Brothers, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.99  Mrs. Henry A. Goodale, Cartes de Visite by Davis, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.100 Harriet Austin, E. P. Kellogg, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.101 Mrs. Atherton or Mrs. M. D. Thirlkel, S. B. Brown, Providence, R.I., undated
2013.66.102 Baby in chair wearing plaid dress, Prescott & Gage, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.103 Woman with brooch, N.A. & R. A. Moore, undated
2013.66.104 Man with bowtie and watch chain, R. A. Lewis, N.Y., undated
2013.66.105 Female child Holcomb, Bartlett & Webster, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.106 James Reynolds, (?), undated
2013.66.107 Julia Waterman, Prescott & Gage, Hartford, C.T., undated

Box 1, Folder 4
2013.66.110 Clara Bedortha, Kellogg, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.111 Clara Bedortha, Kellogg, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.112 George Bedortha, Rodgers Photographic Portraiture, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.113 George Bedortha, Rodgers Photographic Portraiture, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.114 Alfred and George Bedortha, C. T. Stuart, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.115 Alfred and George Bedortha, C. T. Stuart, Hartford, C.T., undated
2013.66.116 Woman in bonnet, A. Bogardus, N.Y., undated
2013.66.117 Woman in bonnet, A. Bogardus, N.Y., undated
2013.66.118  Laurence Bedortha in wicker chair, undated
2013.66.119  Laurence Bedortha in wicker chair, undated
2013.66.120  Alfred Bedortha in swimming costume, Farmington River, April 1955
2013.66.121  57 Poquonock Ave, Windsor C.T., undated
2013.66.122  57 Poquonock Ave, Windsor C.T., undated
2013.66.123  Bridge over river, undated
2013.66.124  cyanotype, town center, printed deep, washed in cold water and ammonia, undated
2013.66.125  cyanotype, house with porch in town, undated
2013.66.126  cyanotype, church, plain brush, undated
2013.66.127  cyanotype, church, undated
2013.66.128  weir, undated
2013.66.129  Inglis’ Home Bakery, undated

Related Materials in Windsor Historical Society

Family files:
   Bedortha Family
   Loomis Family
Subject files:
   Businesses – Manufacturing – Mills
   Businesses – Tobacco

Subject Terms
Bedortha, Laurence Loomis (1837-1926)
Bedortha, Alfred Calvin (1872-1963)
Bedortha, George Quartus (1874-1962)
Windsor, Conn.

Custodial history
The Bedortha Family Papers were donated to Windsor Historical Society by Janet Bedortha Moran in 2013, from the estate of Janet's aunt Ruth Bedortha. The collection was processed and this finding aid written by Kathryn Angelica in 2017.