

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

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Finding Aid for the  
Crosby Family Papers  
Collection # 064

September 2009 version

Abstract

The Crosby Family Papers consist mainly of letters written by members of the extended Crosby family. They describe the life, social conditions, farming, weather, religion and family matters in towns in New York, Connecticut, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, including Grand Rapids. Some of the letters describe pioneer conditions, especially the illnesses and difficulties encountered by those settling in frontier communities in Michigan and Ohio.

Collection #: 064

Accession #: 00.040, i.e. 1980.040

Donor: Ophelia Blake?

Span dates: 1814-1915

Original archival processing date: February 1988.

Size: .21 linear ft. (2.5 inches)

Genealogy

For the benefit of the researcher, the following is a partial genealogy of the Crosby family, based on the limited information found in the correspondence:

Celia ? m. Mr. Crosby

children:

1. Stephen
2. Simeon
3. Elijah

children: 1. Betsey m. Mr. Fletcher

4. Caleb B. m. Lucy ?

Children: 1. S.

5. Susan (1792- ) m. Mr. Barber

children: 1. Lydia

6. Hannah P. m. Andrew Penniman

7. Charles ( -1839) m. Abigail Fairbanks

children:

1. Jane ( -1847)

2. Abigail ( -1844?) m. Dennis ?

3. Rachel ( -1895-6) m. Mr. Wakefield

4. Susan (1823-1897) m. Alexander Blake (1812-1891)

children: 1. Ophelia (1847-1940)

5. Hannah E. m. John Thayer

children: Andrew

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
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Box Inventory 9/2009		
1	Files	slim legal

History

Susan Crosby Barber and her mother Celia Crosby lived in Thompson, Connecticut. The Jason Fairbanks family lived in Watertown, New York. Andrew and Hannah P. Crosby Penniman moved from Thompson, Connecticut to Bloomingburgh, Ohio ca. 1837. Charles and Abigail Fairbanks Crosby moved from Thompson, Connecticut to Fredonia, New York in 1837, to Rawsonville, Ypsilanti, Michigan in 1839, to Bloomingburgh, Ohio ca. 1843, then to Morenci, Michigan ca. 1845. John and Hannah Crosby Thayer moved from Bloomingburgh, Ohio to New Carlisle, Clark County, Indiana in 1847, then to Cambridge City, Indiana in 1847. Alexander and Susan Crosby Blake moved from Medina, Michigan to Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1861.

Scope and Content

The collection contains correspondence among Crosby family members, including relatives outside the immediate family. The earlier letters (1830-1850) are primarily from those members in Michigan and Ohio to their relatives back home in Connecticut. They describe the difficulties of life on the frontier with particular attention given to illness. There is also mention of farming, weather, and religious meetings. Some later letters (1860s) mention the Civil War and the Crosby family's involvement in it. The latest letters (1890-1910) make mention of a Fairbanks family genealogy, which is not in the collection. Also included are estate receipts from the Samuel Fairbanks estate (1829-1835), various invitations and announcements, some poetry and other assorted papers.

Series Description

**Series I. Correspondence to, 1824-1915, n.d.;** 9 folders

Family correspondence describing daily occurrences and family matters. Arranged alphabetically by receiver.

**Series II. Invitations and Announcements, 1866-1914, n.d.;** 1 folder

Invitations and announcements from various social functions.

**Series III. Financial Records, 1829-1908;** 2 folders

Estate receipts and assorted bills, receipts and statements.

**Series IV. Miscellaneous, 1814-1908, n.d.;** 1 folder

Poetry, music, calling cards, request to build toll gate, newspaper article on Miss Sophia Youell.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		<b>Series I. Correspondence to, 1824-1915, n.d.</b>
1	1	Susan Barber, 1831-1847, n.d.
	2	James Bates, 1844
	3	Ophelia Blake, 1895-1915, n.d.
	4	Susan Crosby Blake, 1874, 1893
	5	Abigail Crosby, 1838-1862
	6	Caleb B. Crosby, 1824-1839
	7	Celia Crosby, 1825-1841
	8	Charles Crosby, 1837, 1838
	9	Miscellaneous, 1856, 1898, n.d.
		<b>Series II. Invitations and Announcements, 1866- 1914, n.d.</b>
1	10	Miscellaneous invitations and announcements from social functions, 1866-1914, n.d.
		<b>Series III. Financial Records, 1827-1908, n.d.</b>
1	11	Estate Receipts, 1829-1835
1	12	Miscellaneous receipts and statements, 1827-1908, n.d.
		<b>Series IV. Miscellaneous, 1814-1908, n.d.</b>
1	13	Miscellaneous, 1814-1908, n.d.