

DIMOCK FAMILY.

Dimock family papers, circa 1827-1918

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Dimock family.
Title: Dimock family papers, circa 1827-1918
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 587
Extent: 1.75 linear feet (4 boxes), 11 framed pictures (FP), 1 medal, and 1 oversized papers box (OP)
Abstract: Papers of the Dimock, DeWolf and Knight families including correspondence, photographs, personal items, original writings and printed material from 1827 to 1918.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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Source

Gift, 1979.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Dimock family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.), was born in Petersburg, Virginia, January 25, 1827, son of Joseph Warner Dimock (1801-1892). Other children in the family were Jeanette (1833-1881), William (1837-1873), and Sarah (1835-1890). Joseph Judson Dimock, called "Jud" by his friends and

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family, was educated in Connecticut. Upon completion of his education, he was employed as a merchant and worked in stores in Boston, New York, New Haven, Springfield and other cities of the northeastern United States. After his marriage to Isadora ("Dora," 1823-1902) DeWolf in 1851, he settled in Brooklyn, New York. The couple had five children, two of whom lived to adulthood: sons Joseph DeWolf Dimock (born 1853) and Pat Judson DeWolf Dimock (1860-1885).

Joseph Judson Dimock traveled to Cuba in 1859 and 1861. Both trips were at the request of the DeWolf family who had once lived in Cuba and had continued business interests there. Dimock worked as a clerk in the office of the New York Secretary of State and was a brigade major and inspector of the state militia. He was mustered into the United States Army as a major on May 21, 1861 and received his commission January 23, 1862. As an officer of the 2nd Regiment, New York State Militia and the 82nd New York Infantry Regiment, he participated in the First Battle of Bull Run, July 1861. It was during the Peninsular Campaign that Dimock contracted typhoid fever and died on June 22, 1862. He is buried in Spring Grove in Hartford, Connecticut.

Joseph DeWolf Dimock changed his name to Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) in 1881. He attended schools in Hartford and Chester, Connecticut, and married Amy Trowbridge Knight, daughter of Nehemiah Knight, in 1879. Their children were named Joseph Judson (III), (1880-1951), Ernest Knight (1884-1949) and Marjorie (1889-19??). He died March 8, 1902 in Brooklyn, New York, where he is buried in Greenwood Cemetery. Sources include the Dimock family papers and *New York in the War* by Frederick Pfisterer, (Albany, N.Y., 1909).

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of the papers of the Joseph Judson Dimock family including correspondence, photographs, personal items, original writings and printed material from circa 1827-1918, with the bulk within the period 1850-1890. The letters of Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.) form a fairly complete run of correspondence from 1839 until 1862, when Dimock died. A strength of the collection lies in those letters written by Dimock to his family after he had entered the U.S. Army in 1861. Although the time period covered by these 35 letters (1861-May 1862) is not long and the First Battle of Bull Run is the only battle described in which Dimock was an active participant, the letters are interesting and informative.

Other parts of the collection are also significant. These are the travel diaries and letters of Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.) and Henry H. Knight. Each was written during the mid-nineteenth century and include descriptions of Cuba, Europe, and the Near East. The meticulous inventories and illustrated catalogs kept by Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) to document his collection of antique pistols are unusual. That collection, once believed to be among the best in the United States, was divided and sold upon Dimock's death.

The material in this collection is arranged in three series. Papers of Joseph Judson (Sr.) and (Jr.) each comprise a series while the third series is a gathering of other family members' papers. Five letters from Jennie Dimock to her nephew Joseph Judson (Jr.) and a partial letter to Gertrude DeWolf from another female family member are included here. A major weakness of the collection may be that it fails to present an adequate picture of the lives of the female members of the Dimock family, although it was Jennie Dimock, sister of Joseph Judson Dimock, who preserved her brother's letters for his son. The series also includes letters from Harry and Nehemiah Knight, in-laws to Joseph Judson (Jr.).

Arrangement Note

Organized into three series (1) Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.) papers, (2) Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) papers, and (3) DeWolf, Dimock, and Knight families papers.

Description of Series

[Series 1: Joseph Judson Dimock \(Sr.\) papers, 1839-1862](#)

[Series 2: Joseph Judson Dimock \(Jr.\) papers, 1875-1902](#)

[Series 3: Dewolf, Dimock, and Knight families papers, circa 1827-1918](#)

Series 1
Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.) papers, 1839-1862
Box 1, 2 FP, OP1

Scope and Content Note

The material in this series is primarily concerned with the short military career of Joseph Judson Dimock (Sr.), a major in the U.S. Army, 1861-1862. Correspondence (1839-1862) is filed in chronological order. Letters are from Dimock to his family, both prior to the war and after he had become an U.S. Army officer. Two letters concerning Dimock's death and its aftermath complete the correspondence. One letter, from William, Major Dimock's brother, to his wife Sylvia describes Dimock's condition just prior to his death. Another, written to Dora Dimock, is from the officer who handled the disposition of Dimock's belongings.

Throughout his pre-war letters Dimock wrote of daily events: school, work, boarding house life, illness, visits, and of special events: his wedding day, the birth of his children, the 1860 visit of the Japanese to New York (May 25) and his trip to Cuba in 1859 and 1861. Letters written shortly after his 1861 mustering into the army recount camp life, his opinions of fellow officers and of his men, and the marshaling of forces in the Washington, D.C., area. In letters of July 19 and August 6, 1861 he refers to preparations for, and his part in, the First Battle of Bull Run. A letter of November 24, 1861, predicting a difficult winter, reveals Dimock's personal feelings concerning the hardships endured by his men. In it he expresses a dissatisfaction with a government in whose "army operations political favor seems to be the governing power."

Other Civil War related material follows the correspondence. This includes countersigns used by Dimock and some of his uniform insignia. The series is completed with personal writings by Dimock (including a childhood newspaper, poetry, a diary of his 1859 trip to Cuba) and photographs (a daguerreotype brooch, copy prints of an original Brady glass plate negative {which is housed elsewhere} and a Brady carte-de-visite of Dimock and his fellow officers at Camp Powell, near Washington, D.C.). This latter Brady photograph would have been among the earlier of those taken of the Civil War by this photographer, who had received governmental permission to begin this work in about April 1861.

Box	Folder	Content
1	1-11	Correspondence, 1839-1862
1	12	Letter from William Dimock to Sylvia Dimock re Joseph Judson Dimock's death, June 1862
1	13	Letter to Dora Dimock, 1862
1	14	Resolutions re Dimock's death, 1862
1	15	News accounts of Dimock's death, 1862
1	16	Countersigns used by Dimock, 1861-1862
1	17-19	Photographs, ca. 1861
FP		Photograph: Glass Negative: 4 x 5 [photograph in box 1, folder 18, ca. 1861]
FP		Photograph: Daguerreotype brooch, ca. 1850
1	20	U.S. Army epaulettes, buckle, pin, 1861
1	21	"Firefly" - childhood newspaper produced by Dimock, ca. 1835

1	22	Bound book of poetry, 1848-1850
1	23	Two poems to Isadora Dimock, 1851, 1861
1	24	Diary, 1859 (trip to Cuba)
1	25	Printed material, cat 1860-1862
OP1	1	Clippings, 1827-1862

Series 2**Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) papers, 1875-1902****Boxes 2 - 3 (folders 1-8), 9 FP, 1 medal****Scope and Content Note**

The papers of Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) consist of correspondence, material relating to his collection of pistols and revolvers, family photographs and glass plate negatives, clippings and personal items. Correspondence (1875 - 1891) is from Dimock's aunt Jennie and from his grandfather, Joseph Warner Dimock, with the exception of three letters to Dimock concerning family genealogy. These letters are filed in chronological order and are followed by the inventories, notes, illustrated catalogs, letters, photographs, and one blueprint relating to Dimock's collection of pistols. Most of the original glass plate negatives found in the series were apparently made by Dimock; other photographic prints were made by friends and New York studios. Personal items include books given to Dimock by his mother and grandfather, a medal commemorating the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, an address book and a copy (ca. 1880) of Admiral Farragut's general order #10 (1864) to the D.S. flagship *Hartford*. A memorial leaflet published upon Dimock's death gives biographical information about the Dimock family.

Box	Folder	Content
2	1-5	Correspondence, 1875 - 1892; 1898 - 1901
2	6-7	Pistol collection catalogs, inventories, etc., ca. 1899-1902
2	8	Pistol collection letters, 1899, 1902
2	9-12	Pistol collection photographs and blueprint, 1899-1902
2	13-15	Family Photographs, 1877-1902
2	16	Family Photographs, Dimock Coat of Arms (made ca. 1900)
2	17	Photographs, U.S. Grant and family, 1885; War Eagle, ca. 1876
2	18	Death certificate, clippings, memorial leaflet, 1902
2	19	Grammar exercise, 1867
FP		Glass Negatives: 8 (4 x 5); 1 (5 x 7) [photographs in box 2, folders 9 – 16]

Printed material and memorabilia

3	1-5	Address book, stationery, Farragut order, pamphlets, miscellaneous, ca. 1880-1890
3	6	Whittier Birthday Book, 1881
3	7	Book of Common Prayer
3	8	Book of Psalms, 1863
		Brooklyn Bridge, 1883, commemorative medal (housed elsewhere)

Series 3**Dewolf, Dimock, and Knight families papers, circa 1827-1918****Box 3 (folders 9-12) - 4****Scope and Content Note**

Family papers originating with the Dimock, DeWolf, and Knight families include a partial document (ca. 1827) mentioning a George DeWolf and a Bunage Dimock (the meaning of which is unknown), a partial letter written to Dora DeWolf Dimock's sister Gertrude (ca. 1858) from an unidentified family member; a letter (1863) from Nehemiah Knight to his son Henry H. Knight ("Harry," 1843 - 1882), brother-in-law of Joseph Judson Dimock (Jr.) concerning Harry Knight's proposed trip to the Near East and Europe; and a wedding gift list.

Harry Knight's trip (November 1863 - August 1864) to Egypt, Turkey, Greece and parts of Western Europe is well documented through his letters home. By far the most interesting portion of this series, the bound volume of those letters records Knight's impressions of the many places he visited and the people he encountered.

Box	Folder	Content
3	9	Document, ca. 1827, regarding the finances of John Smith and mentioning George DeWolf and Bunage Dimock
3	10	Letter to Gertrude DeWolf, ca. 1858
3	11	Letter to Henry H. Knight, ca. 1863, from Nehemiah Knight; Knight wedding gift list, ca. 1865
3	12	Postcards and clippings, 1918, n.d.
4	1	Correspondence, Harry Knight, bound volume, 1863-1864
