

**Archives and Special Collections
Martin Library of the Sciences
Franklin and Marshall College**

**Jonathan Messersmith Foltz Papers
MS 21**

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Contact information:

Archives and Special Collections
Martin Library of the Sciences
Franklin and Marshall College
850 Harrisburg Ave. - P.O. Box 3003
Lancaster, PA 17604-3003
717-291-4225 or 717-358-4433
Fax: 717-291-4160
Email: archives@fandm.edu
www.library.fandm.edu/archives

Summary Information

Creator

Foltz, Jonathan Messersmith, 1810-1877

Title

Jonathan Messersmith Foltz Papers

Dates

1825-1906, 1831-1877 (bulk)

Extent

1.75 LF (4 ms. boxes, plus oversize)

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series: Series I - J. M. Foltz material; Series II - Rebecca Steinman Foltz material. Subdivided by type of material: correspondence, journals, notes, etc. Almost all of the material falls within Series I.

Language of Materials

All materials in English.

Abstract

The items in the collection date from 1825 to 1877 and are, for the most part, diaries and journals. There are no childhood records. The materials document Foltz's life from the age of fifteen. It is assumed that the bulk of the collection was assembled by J. M. Foltz. Of particular interest are the contents of Foltz's medical journals: shipboard supplies, pharmaceutical lists, patient and remedy lists, and literature relating to the contemporary practice of medicine. Most of the Civil War related documentation is contained in the diaries and journals.

Subjects

Foltz, Jonathan Messersmith, 1810-1877

Medicine, Naval.

Ship physicians.

United States--History, Naval--To 1900.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Charles Steinman Foltz, Lancaster, PA Gift, 1938.

Custodial History (Provenance)

The Jonathan Messersmith Foltz Papers were donated to the Franklin and Marshall College Library in 1938 by Charles Steinman Foltz (b. 1859 - d. 1941), the son of Jonathan Messersmith Foltz. It is the understanding of the department that the papers had been in the possession of the family up until the time of the donation.

Access Restrictions

Access unrestricted.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

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Notes

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) number: MS 59-191

Preferred Citation

Jonathan Messersmith Foltz Papers (MS 21), Archives and Special Collections, Franklin and Marshall College.

Processing Information

Processed by Karen Ravin (F&M 1989) July 1988. Revised by [Archives staff] January 1992, Michael Lear February 2009. Description based on DACS.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Additional Information

Related Materials

[J. M. Foltz Medical lecture notes, 1825-1829], Health Sciences Library Historical Collections, Health Sciences Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

Jonathan Messersmith Foltz papers, 1829-1871, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

James Buchanan Family Papers Part 7: Papers of Jonathan Messersmith Foltz, LancasterHistory.org, Lancaster, PA.

Publications

Foltz, Charles S. *Surgeon of the Seas: the Adventurous Life of Surgeon General Jonathan M. Foltz in the Days of Wooden Ships*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1931.

Historical/Biographical Information

Jonathan Messersmith Foltz was a practicing physician for more than forty years during the 19th century, a period of transition in the history of American medicine. He began his career in 1830 as an apprentice to Dr. William Thompson of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Later in the same year, he attended and graduated from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, PA. In April of 1831 he was commissioned as an Assistant Surgeon into the United States Navy; he remained in the Navy until his retirement in 1872 at the age of sixty-two .

Foltz was instrumental in the improvement of conditions and services in several Naval hospitals and published a number of articles and essays on medical topics. He was also one of the founding members of the U. S. Naval Medical Board (1857).

Foltz's affiliation with the Navy offered him the opportunity to travel around the world, circumnavigating the globe and crossing the equator during his journeys. Nineteenth century Naval service also meant that Foltz participated in several Civil War Naval engagements, specifically the Mississippi Valley Campaign. The papers contain his detailed notes on the battles. Less than one year before his retirement, Foltz was appointed to two positions: Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and Surgeon General of the Navy.

J. M. Foltz was married at the age of forty-four to Rebecca Steinman, the daughter of a prominent Lancaster businessman. Though he maintained his ties to the Lancaster area throughout his life, returning periodically to visit his parents and in-laws, Foltz and his family made their home in Philadelphia.

Significant Dates: Jonathan Messersmith Foltz (b.1810 - d.1877)

1810 Apr 25 born in Lancaster, PA.

1825 - 1828 studied medicine with Dr. William Thompson in Lancaster, PA.

1829 - 1830? attended and graduated from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, PA.

1831 Apr 4 commissioned as an Assistant Surgeon in the U. S. Navy.

1831 Aug 19 left New York on the U. S. S. Frigate, "Potomac."

1831 - 1834 cruise on the "Potomac" around the world.

1832 Feb 6 bombardment of Qualah Battoo, Sumatra.

1834 Jun returned to Boston with the "Potomac."

1834 Jul served on the Medical Bureau, Washington, D. C.

1834 - 1838 stationed at the Washington Navy Yard.

present at the duel between William C. Graves and Jonathan Cilley.

1835 published "The Medical Statistics and Observations during a Voyage around the World, on board the United States Frigate 'Potomac,' in the years 1831-4."

1837 received honorary degree of Master of Arts from Yale College.

1838 Dec 8 passed [Naval?] examination; commissioned Assistant Surgeon in the Navy.

1839 Apr 1 appointed Surgeon of the Naval Hospital at Port Mahon, Minorca (Mediterranean Sea).
visited Algiers.

1838 published report in the New York Medical Journal on "The Pernicious Fevers of Africa."

- 1841 Mar 13 ordered to report as Surgeon of the U. S. Frigate "Brandywine" and returned to New York.
- 1842 published a series of articles in the Baltimore American, "On the Employment of Steamships of War in the United States Navy."
- 1843 published essay, "On the Endemic Influence of Evil Government as illustrated in the Island of Minorca, with Notes on the Climate, Topography, and Diseases of the Island" and also accounts of the Medical Faculty, the French Military Hospital, and United States Naval Hospital.
- 1843 Oct 30 reported for duty on board the U. S. Frigate "Raritan."
- 1844 Feb 19 sailed on the "Raritan" from New York to Rio de Janeiro.
- 1844 - 1846 served as Fleet Surgeon on the "Raritan" during the Mexican War. present at the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, the blockade of Vera Cruz, and the battles of Alverado and Tobasco.

Genealogies:

Foltz Family

- I. Jonathan Foltz (?) married Elizabeth Messersmith Foltz (?)
 - II. Children:
 - 1. George Foltz (?)
 - 2. Jonathan Messersmith Foltz (1810-1877) married 1854 to Rebecca Steinman (1830-1904)
 - III. Children:
 - 1. Frederick Steinman Foltz (1857-1952) (note: born Frederick Buchanan Foltz; name later changed)
 - 2. Charles Steinman Foltz (1859-1941)
 - 3. Jonathan Clinton Foltz (1864-1941)
 - 4. Reuben Messersmith Foltz (1819-1875)
 - 5. *Benjamin Messersmith Foltz (?)
 - 6. *Sophia Foltz (?)

* birth order unsure

Steinman Family

- I. John Frederick Steinman, Jr. (1789-1884) married 1811 to Maria Gill (?-1818)
 - II. Children:
 - 1. Henrietta Dickert Steinman (1813-1886)
 - 2. George Michael Steinman (1815-1884)
 - 3. Margaretta Steinman (1817-1817)
 - 4. Mary Gill Steinman (1818-1894)

John Frederick Steinman, Jr. married 1824 to Mary Smith Fahnestock (1794-1851)

- II. Children:
 - 1. Susan Smith Steinman (1824-1912)
 - 2. Margaretta Sybilla Steinman (1826-1861)
 - 3. Charles Fahnestock Steinman (1828-1848)
 - 4. Rebecca Steinman (1830-1904) m. to Jonathan Messersmith Foltz (1810-1877)
 - 5. John Frederick Steinman (1832-1899)

6. Amelia Steinman (1834-1917)
7. Andrew Jackson Steinman (1836-1917)

Scope and Content Note

The items in the collection date from 1829 to 1877 and are, for the most part, day planners and journals. There are no childhood records. The materials document Foltz's life from the age of fifteen. There is a limited amount of correspondence which dates from 1825 to 1875.

It is assumed that the bulk of the collection was assembled by J. M. Foltz. Of particular interest are the contents of Foltz's medical journals: shipboard supplies, pharmaceutical lists, patient and remedy lists, and literature relating to the contemporary practice of medicine. Most of the Civil War related documentation is contained in the diaries and journals.

Inventory/Contents

Series I. Jonathan Messersmith Foltz (b.1810 - d.1877)

Box 1 **Correspondence.** (1825 - 1875)

- Addison, William Meade. 1838 Mar 5, 30. (1 f)
- Barton, William P. C. to Med[ical] Fac[ulty] of Jeff[erson] Col[lege]. 1825 Dec 29. (1 f)
- _____. 1831 Mar 8, Apr 2. (1 f) [re: Naval examination and appointment; acknowledgement]
- Buchanan, James and Simon Cameron. 1846 May 16. (1 f)
- Foltz, Charles S. 1875 Jul 22. (1 f)
- ___, Jonathan and Elizabeth. 1851 Jun 28; Aug (1 f)
- ___, Rebecca Steinman. 1866 Aug - 1869 Apr; 1870 Jul 5. (1 f)
- McClellan, James. Dean of the Medical Faculty of Jefferson College. 1830 Mar 1. (1 f)
- Mason, John Y. [Secretary of Navy. manuscript copy]. 1846 May 15. (1f)
- [notification of schedule for medical examination]. 1829 Dec 30. (1 f)
- [references and letter of application for U.S. Navy]. 1829 Jan 30. (1 f)
- Steinman, Andrew Jackson "Jack." 1866; 1868; 1869 Jan to Jul; 1871 Feb 3. (1 f)
- Toucey, Isaac. [Secretary of Navy. manuscript copy. 1857 Aug 20 ?]. (1 f)

Day planners and journals. 1831 - 1865

day planners and journals. 1831-1834; 1839-1846; 1849-1854.

[note: The titles of diaries and journals were probably supplied by son, Charles S. Foltz; Many of the "diaries" are non-narrative, day-planners by nature, some include newspaper clippings, maps, and sketches; materials inserted into diaries and journals filed separately at end].

"Cruise of Potomac. 1831 to 1834." [includes "Daily number of Sick..." and temperature / navigation charts]. (1 vol.)

"Private" journal. 1839-1846; with some paste ins dating from 1851-1852. (1 vol.)

[personal day planner]. 1849-1851. (3 vol.)

Journal. (Cruise of the Jamestown) 1852-1854." (1 vol.)

Box 2 [personal day planner]. 1855; 1857-1865. (10 vols.)

"Journal from 10th Jun 1861 to 10th Jun 1862." (1 vol.)

"Private journal from June 1862 to May 1863." (1 vol.)

Box 3 [personal day planner]. 1867-1869; 1871-1877. (10 vol.)
"Journal- USS Franklin, Jun 1867- Jun 68." (1 vol.)

Box 4 **Medical notes and letter books.** 1844 - 1847; 1851-54; 1867 - 1869.

Journal "1844-1847." (1 vol.)

[letter book]. "U.S. Sloop... Jamestown... April 15, 1851." (1 vol.)

"Copies of official letters, May 1867 to June 1869." (1 vol.)

Inserts from day planners, journals, medical notes and letter books. 1831-1834;
1839 - 1852 ?; 1844-1847; 1852-1854; 1861-1862; 1862-1863; 1867-1869:

"Cruise of Potomac, 1831-1834." (2 f)

"Private." (1 f)

"1844-1847." (1 f)

"1852-1854." (1 f)

"1861-1862" (1 f)

"June 1862 to May 1863." (1 f)

"Copies of official letters, May 1867 to Jun 1869." (1 f)

Professional notes. 1831 Apr and Jun; 1838 (?), Feb; 1841 Mar; 1857; 1867-1871(?)

[personal notes on trip to Baltimore and Washington.] 1831 Apr 10. (1 f)

pay advancement for U.S. Navy, 1831 Jun 29. (1 f)

[deposition, rough draft re: Graves/Cilley Duel (1838) Feb.] (1 f - oversize)

[deposition re: Graves/Cilley duel (1838) Feb 24]. (1 f)

report. U.S. Navy Hospital, Mahon; 1841 Mar 13. (1 f)

[rough draft of promotion request.] ca. 1857. (1 f)

notes re: promotion request ca. 1867-1871]. (1 f)

record of service. n.d. (1 f)

Miscellaneous papers. 1829-1862; 1906

lease. North Queen street residence. Jonathan Foltz, 1829. (1 f)

Yale College. Master of Arts honorary degree, 1837 Dec 8. (1 f)

[envelope; 18__? Feb. 13] (1 f)

playbill. "Robber's Wife." [re: shipboard play on U.S. Ohio.] 1840 Jun 16. (1 f - oversize)

map. "Lloyd's official map of the state of Virginia." 1862

[note: used for Civil War campaigns]. (1 f - oversize)

Bible card. owned by Frederick S. Foltz, dated 1906 Apr 9. (1 f)

[printed design of Surgeon General full dress collar and cuff / uniform; n.d.] (1 f - oversize)

[rock, bullet]. (1 f)

Series II. Rebecca Steinman Foltz. (b.1830 - d.1904)

Box 4 diary. Rebecca Steinman Foltz, 1862. (1 vol.)

[note: includes bank checks inserts. (1 f)]