Prudence Ward and Anne J. Ward Correspondence: Finding Aid

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2129
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
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Overview of the Collection
Title: Prudence Ward and Anne J. Ward Correspondence
Dates (inclusive): 1839-1906
Collection Number: mssHM 68710-68772
Creator: Ward, Prudence, 1795-1874.
Extent: 63 pieces + ephemera in 2 boxes.
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Abstract: The collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, drawings, and photographs of the Ward and Thoreau families, relatives of Henry David Thoreau, of Massachusetts. The collection also contains two pages of proofs of F. B. Sanborn's "First and last journeys of Thoreau (1905)", his lecture to the Emerson Society, and a typescript of his essay "The Women of Concord."
Language: English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Prudence Ward and Anne J. Ward Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Removed or Separated Material
The collection also contains a daguerreotype of Jane Thoreau, Henry David Thoreau’s aunt, within its original case, which was transferred to Photo Archives on February 10, 2006; call number photDAG 155.

Biographical Note
Prudence Ward was born on October 6, 1795, in Newton, Massachusetts, to Joseph Ward and Prudence (Bird) Ward. Both Joseph and Prudence Bird were descendents of William Ward, one of the original founding fathers of Massachusetts. Joseph Ward was a schoolteacher before the Revolutionary War. During the war, he was secretary and aide-de-camp to both General Heath and a distant cousin, General Artemis Ward. He eventually became Colonel of the General-Commissary of the Musters. On November 26, 1778, he was taken prisoner by the British. After his release and retirement from the military he became a realtor and stockbroker. In 1792, he retired from business and in 1796 become the representative for Newton in the General Court. In 1807, he was appointed justice of the Court of Common Pleas for Suffolk County. He died on February 14, 1812.

Joseph and Prudence Bird had eight children: Elizabeth, Joseph, Myra, Joseph, Prudence, Caroline, Dennis, and George Washington. Prudence never married but was a much loved aunt to her nieces and nephews, especially Caroline’s children Ellen, Edmund and George.

After Col. Joseph Ward’s death, Prudence Bird Ward and her daughters, Caroline and Prudence, became close friends with the Thoreau family, especially Mrs. Cynthia Thoreau (Henry David Thoreau’s mother), and Misses Elizabeth, Jane, and Maria Thoreau (Henry David Thoreau’s aunts). It was Maria Thoreau who, in 1817, introduced Caroline Ward to her future husband, Edmund Quincy Sewall. In 1833, Mrs. Ward and Prudence moved to Concord and lived in a house owned by John Thoreau, Sr. (Henry David Thoreau’s father). They lived there until Mrs. Ward’s death in 1844. After her mother’s death, Prudence left Concord but remained a close confidante of Maria and Sophia Thoreau. Caroline’s children were also very
close to the Thoreaus, for her daughter, Ellen received marriage proposals from both John and Henry Thoreau. Even though she rejected both offers, Ellen remained close to Sophia. Ellen’s brother Edmund in 1840 became a student at the Thoreau school and was the inspiration for Henry David Thoreau’s poem “Gentle Boy.” Prudence Ward died on June 2, 1874. Upon Prudence’s death, her niece Anne J. Ward took control of her papers. Anne J. Ward was the daughter of Dennis Ward, Prudence’s brother. Anne J. Ward died on July 19, 1913.

Scope and Content
The collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, drawings, and photographs of the Ward and Thoreau families of Massachusetts. The correspondence consists of letters to Prudence Ward from Sophia, Maria, and Helen Thoreau and Franklin Benjamin Sanborn’s letters to Anne J. Ward (1905, some with enclosed manuscripts). Also included are individual letters by Harrison Gray Otis Blake, Edmund Quincy Sewall, and George Washington Ward. The letters discuss the Alcott family, Mary Merrick Brooks, Lidian Jackson Emerson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and the Thoreau family; American Antislavery Society, Cherokee Nation, Southworth & Hawes daguerreotypes, family affairs, social news, etc. Also included are drawings by Sophia E. Thoreau and Prudence Ward and photographs of places and people connected with the Thoreau family and Prudence Ward. The collection contains two pages of proofs of F. B. Sanborn’s First and last journeys of Thoreau (1905), his lecture to the Emerson Society, and a typescript of his essay “The Women of Concord.” The photographs within the collection all deal with places or people influential to both the Thoreaus and Prudence Ward. The collection also contains 4 folders of ephemera.

Arrangement
The correspondence, manuscripts and drawings are arranged alphabetically according to the author. The photographs follow and are arranged in alphabetical order according to the description of the photograph.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library’s Online Catalog.

Subjects
Alcott family.
Alcott, Abba May, 1800-1877.
Alcott, Amos Bronson, 1799-1888.
Alcott, Louisa May, 1832-1888.
Alcott, May, 1840-1879.
Brooks, Mary Merrick, 1801-1868.
Emerson, Lidian Jackson, 1802-1892.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 1803-1882.
Sanborn, F. B. (Franklin Benjamin), 1831-1917 -- Archives.
Thoreau, Henry David, 1817-1862.
Thoreau, Henry David, 1817-1862 -- Family -- Archives.
Thoreau, Jane, 1784-1864.
Thoreau, John, 1815-1842.
Thoreau, Maria, 1794-1881 -- Correspondence.
Thoreau, Sophia E. -- Archives.
American Anti-Slavery Society.
Emerson Society.
Southworth & Hawes.
Biographers -- Correspondence.
Women -- New England -- Correspondence.
Cherokee Indians.
New England -- Social life and customs -- 19th century -- Sources.
**Forms/Genres**
- Drawings -- United States -- 19th century.
- Family papers New England -- 19th century.
- Letters (correspondence) -- United States -- 19th century.
- Manuscripts -- United States -- 19th century.
- Photographs -- United States -- 19th century.
- Ephemera -- United States -- 19th century.

**Additional Contributors**
- Blake, H. G. O. (Harrison Gray Otis), 1816-1898.
- Sanborn, F. B. (Franklin Benjamin), 1831-1917.
- Sewall, E. Q. (Edmund Quincy), 1828-1908.
- Thoreau, Helen L. (Helen Louisa), 1812-1849.
- Thoreau, Maria, 1794-1881.
- Thoreau, Sophia E.
- Ward, Anne J., 1840-1913, correspondent.

**Indexing: Subjects**
- Alcott, Abigail (May). In Maria Thoreau, letter to Prudence Ward, 1870, Feb. 28. HM 68722.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 1803-1882. In Helen L. Thoreau, letter to Prudence Ward, 1845, Apr. 27. HM 68720.
- *The First and Last Journeys of Thoreau*. In F.B. (Franklin Benjamin) Sanborn, letter to Anne J. Ward, 1905, June 23. HM 68716.
- Thoreau, Henry David, 1817-1862. In F.B. (Franklin Benjamin) Sanborn], [Untitled beginning]: "The demand for specimens of Thoreau's..." HM 68712.

Box 1  Correspondence, Manuscripts, Drawings, Photographs

Correspondence, Manuscripts, and Drawings

Sanborn, F. B. (Franklin Benjamin), 1831-1917. [Untitled beginning]: “The demand for specimens of Thoreau’s...” MS. (typewritten: 1 p. partial). HM 68712
Sanborn, F. B. (Franklin Benjamin), 1831-1917. 1 letter to Anne J. Ward, 1840-1913, L.S. (typewritten: 1 p.), 1905, June 23. Enclosure: Two pages of proofs from The First and Last Journeys of Thoreau edited by F.B. Sanborn, cataloged separately—HM 68711. HM 68716
Sanborn, F. B. (Franklin Benjamin), 1831-1917. 1 letter to Anne J. Ward, 1840-1913, A.L.S. (1 p.), 1906, Apr. 1, Concord, Mass. Contains envelope. HM 68717
Thoreau, Maria, 1794-1881. 3 letters to Prudence Ward, 1795-1874. HM 68721-68723

Note
Note: Daguerreotype of Jane Thoreau transferred to Photo Archive on February 10, 2006, call number photDAG 155.

Thoreau, Sophia E. “Birth Place of Dr. Bodell”: Drawing. Note: Notation on a separate piece of page describes the drawing as being by Sophia E. Thoreau in unknown hand. HM 68724

[Thoreau, Sophia E.] “Edelwiss”: Drawing. HM 68725

Thoreau, Sophia E. 4 letters to Prudence Ward, 1795-1874. HM 68726-68729.


Ward, Prudence, 1795-1874. “Hibiscis”: Drawing. Note: Drawings on both sides of the paper. HM 68731

Photographs

-----. “Boulder Field.” HM 68732
-----. [George Critcherson]. HM 68733
-----. “Egg Rock.” HM 68734
-----. Entrance to unidentified house. HM 68735
-----. “Fairhaven.” HM 68736
-----. “Fairhaven Bay.” HM 68737
-----. “Fairhaven Pond.” HM 68738
-----. “Flint’s Bridge.” HM 68739
-----. E. Garrett. HM 68740
-----. Grave and headstones for the entire Thoreau family. HM 68741
-----. “Great Meadows, Bulls Hill (Daniel Chester French, 1850-1931 on horseback?).” HM 68742
-----. Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1804-1864—Old Manse. HM 68743
-----. Edmund Hosmer, 1798-1881, House. HM 68744
-----. House/building once belonging to the Thoreau family—57 Prince Street. Note: Newspaper clipping about this house/building located in Ephemera folder labeled: “Newspaper Clippings.” HM 68745
-----. Laura P. Hows(?). HM 68746
-----. [“Minot House”?]. HM 68747
-----. “Mud Meadow Birch”?). HM 68748

Box 2 Photographs (cont.), Ephemera, and Bindings

Photographs

-----. “Old Marlboro Road.” HM 68749
-----. “Old Marlboro Road.” HM 68750
-----. “Old Road.” HM 68751
-----. “Pines.” HM 68752
-----. “Site of Thoreau’s House, Walden Pond.” HM 68753
-----. “Spring from Nashawtuc Hill.” HM 68754
-----. “Summer from Nashawtuc Hill.” HM 68755
-----. [Cynthia D. (Cynthia Dunbar) Thoreau, 1787-1872]. Note: Notation in pencil on verso: “Mrs. John Thoreau from silhouette form possession of Mary Moody Emerson.” Notation in unknown hand. HM 68756
-----. Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862. HM 68757
-----. Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862. HM 68758
-----. Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862. HM 68759
-----. Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862, Bust. HM 68760
### Photographs

-----. “Henry D. Thoreau and Site of House at Walden.” HM 68761
-----. [Henry David Thoreau's chair, desk and bed.” HM 68762
-----. Henry David Thoreau’s House on Main Street. HM 68763
-----. Jane Thoreau, 1784-1864. Note: Original daguerreotype transferred to Photo Archive on February 10, 2006, call number photDAG 155. HM 68764
-----. John Thoreau, 1787-1859. HM 68765
-----. Maria Thoreau, 1794-1881. HM 68766
-----. Sophia E. Thoreau. HM 68767
-----. Unidentified house. HM 68768
-----. Unidentified woman. HM 68769
-----. Unidentified woman. HM 68770
-----. Unidentified woman. HM 68771
-----. [Anne J. Ward, 1840-1913]. HM 68772

### Ephemera

| Folder 1 | Business Card for the Colonial Inn. Note: In 1799, John Thoreau (Henry David Thoreau’s grandfather) purchased part of the building for his family. |
| Folder 2 | Clippings of images from newspapers and magazines. |
| Folder 3 | Newspaper clippings about Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Sophia E. Thoreau. |
| Folder 4 | Postcard of the “Home of Thoreau and the Alcotts.” |

### Original bindings

| Folder 1 | Binding that housed the manuscripts and correspondence by F. B. Sanborn to Anne J. Ward. |
| Folder 2 | Binding that housed the correspondence, drawings, photographs and ephemera by and about the Thoreau and Ward families. |