

**Timothy R. Merrill (1822-1894)**  
**Correspondence, 1837-1850**  
**MSA 187**

**Introduction**

This collection consists of personal correspondence directed to Timothy R. Merrill of Montpelier, Vermont, during the period 1837-1850. The Vermont Historical Society purchased the collection from manuscript dealer Brad Sheff of Northfield, Vermont, in 1997 (ms. acc. no. 97.16). It is housed in one flip top archival box and occupies .25 linear feet of shelf space.

**Biographical Notes**

Timothy Robinson Merrill, the son of Timothy and Clara (Fassett) Merrill, was born on April 3, 1822, in Montpelier, Vermont. For a time he worked as assistant postmaster in Montpelier. He was elected as probate judge in 1860 and served until 1870. In 1874 he was elected town clerk and served until his death on November 21, 1894. He married Elizabeth J. Boutwell, the daughter of Colonel Levi Boutwell of Montpelier, Vermont on September 28, 1852. They had one child, Timothy R. Merrill, Jr.

Edwin Seymour Merrill, brother to Timothy, was born June 2, 1817, in Montpelier, Vermont. He worked as assistant postmaster in both Montpelier and Bennington, Vermont, and was postmaster in Montpelier from 1842 to 1844. On August 8, 1843, he married Harriet H. Hand of Peacham, Vermont. Shortly after their marriage, they moved to Winchendon, Massachusetts. They had three children: Clara Augusta, Edwin H., and Harriet A. Merrill.

Ferrand Fassett Merrill, brother to Timothy, was born October 24, 1814, in Montpelier, Vermont. He read law and was admitted to the Washington Bar in 1836. He was clerk of the House of Representatives from 1838 to 1849 and was Secretary of State from 1849 to 1853. He served as a state representative from Montpelier in 1856 and 1857. He married Eliza Maria Wright on September 5, 1844. They had three children: Chester W., Charlotte H., and Mary A. Merrill. He died May 2, 1859.

**Scope & Content**

The collection contains letters primarily to Timothy R. Merrill from family members and friends during the period 1837-1850, but there are also a few letters from Timothy to his brother Edwin. During the period of this correspondence, Timothy lived in Montpelier, but in 1842 we find him in New York City on business, in Bennington visiting relatives, and in Saratoga Spa, N.Y., where he went for health reasons.

The letters are mainly personal in nature, but contain observations of life, transportation, politics, music and relationships during that time. Letters from school chums provide a glimpse into the humor of the day, and the erudition commonplace in

correspondence of the times.

Timothy's brother, Edwin S. Merrill, was postmaster at Montpelier during at least a portion of this period and enjoyed (and often commented on) his franking privileges. Another brother, Ferrand F. Merrill (often referred to simply as F.F.) was a frequent subject of the correspondence and a less frequent author. Timothy's sister-in-law, Harriet (Edwin's wife); Harriet's sister, Frances; and Timothy's mother, Clara; are sometime correspondents and other family members are frequently mentioned in the letters, as are various (sometimes unnamed) cousins, aunts, uncles and other relatives.

### Inventory of Letters

#### MSA 187:1

22 April 1837, from Edwin S. Merrill in Bennington. to his brother, Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier

*Family news. Mentions Augusta, "F.F., Esq.", Seymour, uncle and cousins in Bennington, and mother.*

16 September 1837, from Ferrand F. Merrill in Hardwick to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Family news. Mentions Mr. Hill, Rev. C. Wright, and mother.*

14 February 1838, from Edwin S. Merrill in Bennington to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Family news. Mentions Ferrand, Mr. Barker, O.H. Tillotson, "uncle & cousins", F.F., Augusta and Mr. Kellogg.*

1 March 1838, from Edwin S. Merrill in Bennington to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.  
*Mostly family news. Mentions Benton & Fuller's paper mill fire, and local wedding between Harrington sisters of Manchester to Lyman Robinson and A.P. Lyman (son and nephew, respectively, of Maj. Robinson). Also, Augusta, Ferrand and mother.*

30 July 1838, from Edwin S. Merrill in Bennington to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.  
*Mostly personal commentary. Mentions "uncle & cousins", Geo. P. Walton, sister Augusta and F.F.*

23 August 1838, from Edwin S. Merrill in Bennington to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Ed talks about getting ready to return to Montpelier. Mentions F.F., Mr. Kellogg, Aunt Mary, Uncle Amos & Lady, Uncle, Mary & Alice, Geo. P. Walton, Wm. Clark and mother*

**MSA 187:2**

12 June 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington.  
*Ed sends a letter addressed to "Millers brother". Brief mention of Seymour & c. (cousins?); also Henry & John.*

15 June 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill [in Troy].  
*Talks about Timothy travelling to New York City. Mentions E.P. Walton, Jr. & wife, Mr. Canderbeek & wife, Nicholas, George and F.F.*

15-16 June 1842, from Ferrand F. and Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier to Timothy R. Merrill [in Bennington].  
*Mention of the weather (snowstorm), and Tim's trip to Troy, N.Y. Persons mentioned include E.P. Walton, Jr. & lady, D. Robinson, Mr. & Mrs. Howe, Miss Markham, Augusta, Cowen Robinson, Laura, and Mrs. Candebreek.*

22 June 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in New York City.  
*Mainly news of family and acquaintances. Mentions Walton & his wife, Elmira, Aunt Ketcham, F.F., Mr. Wood, Mr. Ketcham, George Reed, Almira, Martha, Paddock and Chas. Fitch. Also mentions millenarian sermon.*

25 June 1842, from Ferrand F. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in New York City.  
*Asks for an account of Timothy's trip to New York, and transmits news of family & acquaintances. Includes a note from brother Edwin. The letter and note mention Doct. Rogers, John Wainwright and sister, Col. Washburn, Geo. Wheeler, Mr. Howe, Mr. Robinson, mother, Edwin, Caira Langdon, Mr. Wood, Mr. Ketcham, Elmira, Fay, Alice, Gen. Robinson, Cowan Robinson, Norman & his wife, Achemiah Harvey, Hurane Stone and David Marsh*

25 June 1842, from [Edwin S. Merrill] in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill [in New York City]. There is a penciled note from Harriet S. Hand on the back.  
*Brief description of Saratoga; complaint about lack of mail from his brother other family members. Edwin decries the backwardness of Benningtonians, recommends staying in New York City until after July 4th, and suggests a possible trip to Saratoga for Tim's health. Harriet scolds Timothy for not writing to her, as he had promised. Edwin's letter mentions Seymour, Mary, Alice, John Fay, Dr. Rodgers, Nicholas, Savier, Wm. Dana, Doctor Abbott, Wm. Clark & Lady, Mr. Harrington, George, Sarah & Pearson W., Chauncey, Miss Wing and F.F.*

2 July 1842, from Timothy R. Merrill in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., to Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier.

5 July 1842, from T.R.M. in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., to Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier.  
*Discussion of his physical ailments, and his distress at not receiving mail.*

6 July 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Saratoga Spa, N.Y.

*Edwin discusses the 4th of July celebration at the State House, and mentions Ferrand's trip to the State convention in Middlebury.*

7 July 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Saratoga Spa, N.Y.

*Advice from Dr. Adams passed on to Tim by his brother.*

8 July 1842, from Ferrand F. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill (care of Jas. [S.] Merrill, Esq.), in Bennington. Also, a note from Edwin follows F.F.'s letter.

*References to Timothy's health and travels, and a very brief reference to the State convention*

9 July 1842, from L[aura] H. Wetherby in Montpelier, to T.R.M. [in Bennington]. A brief note from Ned follows the letter.

*Family news; reference to 4th of July festivities, and to Timothy's ill health.*

11 July 1842, from Harriet S. Hand in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington.

*She urges Timothy to return home to Montpelier.*

12 July 1842, from Timothy R. Merrill in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., to Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier.

*More complaints about lack of mail.*

13 July 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington.

*Sends money, along with advice on Timothy's forthcoming trip up from Bennington. Political references, including specific comments about Gov. Charles Paine.*

14 July 1842, from Ferrand F. Merrill in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington, care of Capt. J. S. Merrill; post script by Ned (Edwin).

*Relates his trip to the State Convention in Middlebury.*

16 July 1842, from Harriet S. Hand in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington. A second letter follows the first. It is dated 18 July 1842, from Edwin S. Merrill.

*Advised that Timothy will be returning soon from Bennington, Harriet tells Timothy that she will not be able to get together with him in Peacham, and Edwin gives advice on the trip home.*

19 July 1842, from Harriet S. Hand in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Bennington. A note from Edwin S. Merrill is appended.

*Harriet once more expresses regret that she will not be able to see Tim in Peacham when he returns; comments on the weather and numerous inquiries from friends regarding Timothy.*

17 & 18 August 1842, from Harriet S. Hand in Peacham to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Harriett describes her trip from Montpelier, to Danville, and then to Peacham, where she is staying with her sister; describes her days in Peacham.*

3 Sep 1842, from Harriet S. Hand in Peacham to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Harriet, in a philosophical mood, reacts to a sermon she heard delivered by a Rev. Mr. Merrill; encourages Timothy to write often.*

23 Oct 1842, from J. R. Spaulding in Clarksville, Ga. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

*Long discourse from a friend; describes his post at a school in Georgia; decries the marriage of a mutual friend.*

### **MSA 187:3**

10 May 1843, from Harriet S. Hand in Peacham to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

12 August 1843, from Frances Hand in Peacham to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

13 August 1843, from Edwin S. Merrill in Clarendon Springs to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier. A note from Harriet (Hand) Merrill ("Haet") follows Ed's letter.

12 September 1843, from Eunice L. Vail in Detroit, Mich. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

4 March 1844, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier. A second letter, from brother Ed, follows the first.

19 March 1844, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

26 April 1844, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

26 April 1844, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

13 May 1844, from Frances (Hand) Bement in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

23 May 1844, from C. M. Rubley in Woodstock to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

3 June 1844, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill (letter finished by Edwin) in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

20 August 1844, from Eunice L. Vail in Detroit, Mich. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

28 August 1844, from Boss [George Reed] in Montpelier, to Timothy R. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass.

4 October 1844, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

21 October 1844, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

4 November 1844, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

27 November 1844, from Frances (Hand) Bement in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

27 December 1844, invoice and note from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

**MSA 187:4**

12 February 1845, from Lee in Detroit, Mich. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

22 February 1845, from C. M. R. in Woodstock to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

18 March 1845, from Frances (Hand) Merrill in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

23 April 1845, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

9 August 1845, from Frances (Hand) Bement in Peacham. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

[4] October 1845, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. A second letter follows the first, from Clara F. Merrill to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

27 October 1845, from Edwin, Harriet and Clara F. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

28 October 1845, from Frances (Hand) Merrill in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

8 January 1846, from Eunice in Detroit, Mich. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

9 January 1846, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

20 March 1846, from Frances (Hand) Bement in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

18 July 1846, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

30 July 1846, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

30 January 1847, from Frances (Hand) Bement in Phelps, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

**MSA 187:5**

9 March 1848, from M. M. Colburn in Andover, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

12 May 1848, from M. M. Colburn in Concord, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

31 August 1848, from Clara F. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

11 September 1848, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill in Winchendon, Mass., followed by a note from Clara F. Merrill to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

11 October 1848, from M. M. Colburn in New Ipswich, N.H. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

26 December 1848, from M. M. Colburn in Andover, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

26 December 1848, from Clara F. Merrill in Plattsburgh, N.Y. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

9 October 1849, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

19 October 1849, from Edwin S. Merrill in Winchendon, Mass. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

1 June 1850 from [I.]R.S. in New York City. to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

**MSA 187:6**

Undated, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

1[2] September \_\_\_\_, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill to Timothy R. Merrill in Montpelier.

Undated small engraving (unidentified).

Undated, from Harriet (Hand) Merrill [in Winchendon, Mass.].

Robert M. Murphy  
April 1998