

**Peck/Pettingill Family
Papers, 1856-1911
MSA 402**

Introduction

This collection contains two childhood diaries and one adult diary of Ada Pettingill Peck and three folders of material from related Peck family members, all of Montpelier, Vermont, from the period 1856-1911. Wilda Bennett (Peck) O'Hanlon, granddaughter of Ada Peck, gave the collection to the Vermont Historical Society in 1981. It is stored in one archival flip top box and consumes .5 linear foot of shelf space.

Biographical Notes

Ada Pettingill Peck (b. May 4, 1851 in Barre, Vermont, d. June 21, 1917, in Lynn, Massachusetts) was the daughter of Aaron M. Pettingill and Emily J. Johonnott. Ada lived in Montpelier, Vermont, before moving to Mantorville, Minnesota, so that Ada could attend preparatory school at Ferry Hall Collegiate Institution for Young Ladies in Lake Forest, Illinois. In 1876, she married Roswell K. Peck of Montpelier, Vermont, in Richmond, Illinois, and the two returned to Montpelier. They had two children, Julia Peck (b. May 5, 1879, in Montpelier, Vermont, d. March 29, 1941, in Poughkeepsie, New York) and Martin Peck (b. December 14, 1880, d. May 7, 1940, in Boston, Massachusetts).

Roswell K. Peck (b. March 26, 1850, d. January 1, 1911, in Montpelier, Vermont) was the son of William Nelson and Julia Clark Peck. He married Ada Pettingill Peck in 1876. He was a hardware merchant in Montpelier, following in the footsteps of his father, who partnered with Thomas C. Barrows (father of Isabella Barrows) to open a hardware firm in 1869.

Martin Peck was the son of Ada Pettingill Peck and Roswell K. Peck. He graduated from Montpelier High School in 1898 and married Wilda Claire Strong in 1913. They had one daughter, Wilda Claire (Peck) O'Hanlon.

Laura Isabella "Belle" Barrows Peck (b. May 31, 1846, d. March 28, 1929, Montpelier, Vermont) was the wife of George Augustus Peck (b. 1843, Montpelier, Vermont, d. ?). George A. Peck was the brother of Roswell K. Peck.

Elizabeth M. Peck (Mrs. George B. Peck) (b. about 1876, Massachusetts, d. ?) was married to George B. Peck, b. February 8, 1871, Vermont, d. December 19, 1946, San Bernardino, California. George B. Peck was the son of Laura Isabella Barrows Peck and George A. Peck.

Scope and Content Note

Ada Pettingill's first diary contains notes and compositions for a literature class she attended in Montpelier, Vermont, in 1868. The diary contains biographies of poets and prose authors of the early-mid 19th century including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edgar Allen Poe, and Lucretia Davidson, as well as full transcriptions of their works. Some poems of uncertain origin may be of Ada's own composition. Also included are some unflattering notes written by Ada about her classmates.

Ada Pettingill's second diary contains her memoirs and compositions from her studies at Ferry Hall Collegiate Institution for Young Ladies in Forest Lake, Illinois. Along with descriptions of her daily life and activities, Miss Pettingill describes her lessons in rhetoric and anatomy and physiology in detail. The diary also includes almost daily descriptions of weather, references to an "interesting talk about the Red Man" (Native Americans) and descriptions of a Native American prayer ceremony as witnessed by a "visiting gentleman," and references to the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. Ada also writes of her experience looking back on Vermont from Illinois and American perspectives on Europe as relayed by a teacher.

Ada Pettingill Peck's third diary is a five-year "Line-a-Day" style diary detailing her married life in Montpelier, Vermont, 1903-1907. Along with descriptions of social calls, literary and theatrical events, and her daily life, Ada gives detailed notations of the weather (including temperature) daily. This diary includes news clippings related to her family and events described in the diary.

Martin Peck's papers include a book given to him in 1893 for "Punctuality to Sunday School at the Church of the Messiah," and a picture-book entitled "King Winter" of uncertain origin. Also included are letters to his school friend Chester W. Wright (great-grandson of Reverend Chester Wright, a "noted divine of his day") during Chester's studies in Germany, as well as the program for Martin's high school graduation and the speech he gave during the graduation ceremony entitled "Our Flag." In this speech, Martin references the flag as a symbol of patriotism in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Civil War.

Laura Isabella "Belle" Barrows Peck's school notebooks include compositions related to social conventions of the time (i.e., conceptions of passion, anger, virtue) as well as fictional pieces and non-fiction essays on topics such as the seasons and town of Montpelier.

Also included are materials from two separate social events. The first, a "Wooden Wedding" (celebration of the fifth [wooden] wedding anniversary?) held in 1872, was attended by Roswell K. Peck. Materials related to this event are a list of provisions and guests, and a list of gifts received, written by an unknown individual.

The final collection of materials relates to a "Ladies' Week" held in Montpelier in 1908, and includes news clippings, a photo of Mrs. George B. Peck, and an invitation to the reception addressed to Mr. and Mrs. George B. Peck.

Related Collections

The Vermont Historical Society's picture file includes photographic portraits of Ada and Martin Peck.

Inventory

MSA 402:01	Ada Pettingill, literature notebook, 1868
02	_____, school diary, 1871-1872
03	_____, diary, 1903-1907
04	_____, removed from diary, 1906-1911, n.d.
05	Martin Peck, letters and school papers, 1892-1893, n.d.
06	Isabella Barrows, school notebooks, 1856, 1862-1863
07	Roswell K. Peck, Wooden Wedding materials, 1872
08	Mrs. George B. Peck, Ladies' Week materials, 1908

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