

NEW HAVEN COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LIBRARY

Manuscripts

No. #49

Date processed:

September 1, 1976

- I. Title Beckwith, George (1810-1880) Diaries, 1854-1880.
- II. The papers of George Beckwith deposited in the Library on 1910, by F.H. Russell In converted the deposit to a gift.
- III. Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 2½ ft.
Approximate number of items: 191 small, handmade books
- IV. Restrictions: none
- V. Literary rights of the unpublished writings of in these papers, and in other collections of papers in the custody of the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library, have been dedicated to the New Haven Colony Historical Society.
- VI. Press release was issued on
- VII. Biographical note: George Beckwith, July 10, 1810--July 12, 1880. Born in Berlin, Ct.; his parents moved to Southington and in 1839 he came to New Haven. Beckwith had some formal education but his good memory and intellectual curiosity enabled him to acquire a vast, diversified knowledge. He was fascinated by math problems, astronomy and quoted scripture and poetry. Started out as a clerk; taught school in Southington, from 1840-1852 in New Haven, from 1847-1852 in East Haven, Fair Haven District and Wallingford. Published Beckwith's Almanac, 1848 1st issue, at the suggestion of F. Trowbridge; from 1849--1860 it was published by the author, from 1860 by Peck, White & Peck. In 1865 Beckwith was appointed County Surveyor and moved to Bridgeport, 1863-1872.. Beckwith worked on the New Haven Dictionary. Introduced and taught Pitman shorthand (phonography) in N.H. In 1841 he married the widow Phoebe A. Booth and had a daughter, who later wrote his biography and a son who died at the age of five.. Beckwith was a member of the Baptist Church of Rev. Thos Teesdale; Masonic Lodge from 1837; Debating Club. He was a Whig, collected signatures for the abolition of property qualifications to vote (1842), petitioned the Ct. Legislation to grant the right to vote to blacks (1845), opposed slavery. Due to his father's drinking habits, he supported the Temperance movement. For additional info. see : George Beckwith by M.L. Beckwith Ewell; Beckwith's Almanac. Beckwith kept a diary from 1854, with daily entries from 1865. Besides notations on weather, rainfall and surveying, it also contains a wealth of info. on N.H. and his contemporaries. He made extensive notations in Pitman shorthand, the key to which appears in the Almanac, 184
- VIII. Analysis: The collection consists of 182 diaries arranged chronologically and 9 misc. booklets. The diaries are bundled and each bundle is labelled. The containers are numbered in Roman numerals. Within each container the bundles are lettered consecutively. For additional information see the content guide.

CONTENT GUIDE

George Beckwith Diaries

Box I Diaries--

- A. 1854--Oct. 1865 [7]
- B. Dec. 1865--June 1866 [6]
- C. June 1866--Nov. 1866 [6]
- D. Nov. 1866--July 1867 [6]
- E. April 1867--Dec. 1867 [7]
- F. Jan. 1868--April 1868 [4]

Box II

- A. April 1868--August 1868 [6]
- B. Aug. 1868--Dec. 1868 [5]
- C. Jan 1869--June 1869 [6]
- D. June 1869--Nov. 1869 [6]
- E. Dec. 1869--Feb. 1870, May--June 1870 [5]
- F. July 1870--Oct 1870 [4]

Box III

- A. Nov. 1870--March 1871 [5]
- B. April--June 1871 [4]
- C. July--November 1871 [5]
- D. Dec. 1871--March 1872 [6]
- E. April--Aug. 1872 [5]
- F. Sep. 1872--Feb. 1873 [6]

Box IV

- A. March--Oct. 1873 [5]
- B. Nov. 1873--Feb. 1874 [4]
- C. March--July 1874 [5]
- D. Aug--Nov. 1874 [4]
- E. Dec. 1874--March 1875 [4]
- F. April--August 1875 [5]

Box V

- A. Sep.--1875--Dec. 1875 [4]
- B. Jan.--May 1876 [5]
- C. June--Oct. 1876 [5]
- D. ~~Nov 1876--March 1877 [5]~~
- E. April 1877--Sep. 1877 [5]
- F. Oct. 1877--Jan. 1878 [4]

Box VI

- A. Feb.--June 1878 [5]
- B. July--Oct. 1878 [4]
- C. Feb.--June 1879 [5]
- D. July--Nov. 1879 [5]
- E. Dec. 1879--April 1880 [5]
- F. May-July 1880; plus one dated 1810 with entries in Pitman shorthand.
- G. Miscellaneous
 - 1. Math prize problems--Yale College, 1846
 - 2. Angles of Streets--Bridgeport
 - 3. Survey of Land--Bridgeport, 1875
 - 4. Survey for Wood Brothers & Co.--Bridgeport, 1868
 - 5-9. Computations--Latitudes

Removed from the pdf version of the finding aid:

New Haven Register article entitled “New Haven’s odd champion of lost causes,” by Neil Hogan. Sunday, April 24, 1988, page B6.

The print version of the finding aid contains the original article.