

WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

ARCHIVES

2007.34

Curtis Family
Collection

Processed by Forrest Wright
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Collection Information

Abstract : The collection contains financial records, letters, court proceedings, newspapers, and family news (marriage announcements, deaths, etc...). Also included are photographs of the family residence and a few pieces of ephemera (business cards, opera tickets, etc...).

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation : Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance : Found in Archives

MARC Access : Collection is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings

Historical/Biographical Notes

While many settlers coming to America in the early 17th century came primarily for the purpose of religious freedom, Cora Berry Whitin, author of *Curtis Clan: A Family Sketch* asserts that it was most-likely the “spirit of adventure” that brought Henry Curtis (1607-78) to the New World in 1636. Settling initially as a wheel-right in Watertown, MA, within three years later (1639) Henry had become a proprietor and a married man (to a woman name Mary Gay in 1638). The couple had three male children, the first being Ephraim (1642-78) whom was the first settler of Worcester. The youngest, Joseph (1647-1700), came to inherit a substantial amount of land in Watertown when his grandmother (on Mary Gay’s side) passed away. His brother Ephraim similarly left Joseph much land in the Worcester area when he died in 1678.

Joseph’s second son John (1707-1797) became one of the most influential figures in early Worcester history. While Ephraim had originally settled the area some years back, Joseph was the first of the Curtis family to make Worcester his official, full-time residence. In the midst of building his new home in Worcester, John found time to serve as a highway surveyor and as a leading member of the Old South Church. From this point on the Curtis family became a mainstay in Worcester, thriving to this day.

Since John there have been several other notable members of the Curtis family. Tyler-Prentice (1810-96) made considerable money from the selling of goods from the Curtis farmland. His son John-Drennan (1850-1929) also did well in business and was noted by his peers as an ingenious inventor who never received due credit. Edwin P. Curtis (1844-1931, son of Amelia Riley Curtis) grew up in St. Louis but came to Worcester for his education. While still a young boy, Edwin decided to enlist in the Union army and served until 1864. Once returning home Edwin prospered as a businessman, becoming President of A.P. Richardson (a manufacturer) and a trustee of the Worcester Five Cents Saving Bank. Charles S. Curtis studied medicine at Harvard and Yale, almost guaranteeing himself a future of financial success. However Charles chose to conduct his practice along the frozen banks of Newfoundland, helping fisherman who could scarcely pay him the bloated fees he would have received from the American upper-class. Charles’ humanitarianism is perhaps best demonstrated through the following quote: “I’d rather be up here doctoring the poor who are really sick, than in a big city looking after people with a lot of money who just think they are sick!”

The Curtis family has left an indelible impression on Worcester still felt to this day. Drivers along Rt. 70 today will notice a marker reading, “Here Ephraim Curtis white settler built in 1673 and lived until driven off by the Indians.” Additionally, John P. Curtis (1912-94) served as President of the Worcester Historical Museum from 1961-70, expanding the institution to include a location on 39 Salisbury Street. John was also a key figure in the move to preserve the Salisbury Mansion, Worcester’s first historic house museum.

Scope and Content

The collection contains financial records, letters, court proceedings, newspapers, and family news (marriage announcements, deaths, etc...). Also included are photographs of the family residence and a few pieces of ephemera (business cards, opera tickets, etc...).

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Ephemera

Series 2: Promissory Notes

Series 3: Registry of Deeds

Series 4: Money Received by Local Business

Series 5: Tax Material

Series 6: Bank Notes

Series 7: Financial Records

Series 8: Money

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Series 18: Late Curtis Family Exchanges

Series 19: Family Announcements

Series 20: Newspaper Material

Series 21: Newspaper Clippings

Series 22: Saved Written Material

Series 23: Miscellaneous

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 1, Ephemera

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2007.34.1.1	Miss Mary Business Card
1	1	2007.34.1.2	Scribble, T.S. Curtis
1	1	2007.34.1.3	Written Note, Lydia Curtis (1837)
1	1	2007.34.1.4	Opera Ticket (1865)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 2, Promissory Notes

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2007.34.2.1	\$500 to Tyler Curtis (1839)
1	2	2007.34.2.2	\$520 to Tyler Curtis (1840)
1	2	2007.34.2.3	\$1000 to Worcester Savings (1842)
1	2	2007.34.2.4	\$3460 to Account (1869)
1	2	2007.34.2.5	Land Survey Bill (1870)
1	2	2007.34.2.6	\$61 Pew Tax (1877)
1	2	2007.24.2.7	\$4500 to Worcester Savings (1879)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 3, Registry of Deeds

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	2007.34.3.1	Deed (1754)
1	3	2007.34.3.2	Deed (1790)
1	3	2007.34.3.3	Deed (1813)
1	3	2007.34.3.4	Deed (1835)
1	3	2007.34.3.5	Deed (1835)
1	3	2007.34.3.6	Deed (1835)
1	3	2007.34.3.7	Deed (1835)
1	3	2007.34.3.8	Deed (1836)
1	3	2007.34.3.9	Deed (1837)
1	3	2007.34.3.10	Deed (1840)
1	3	2007.34.3.11	Deed (1841)
1	3	2007.34.3.12	Deed (1842)
1	3	2007.34.3.13	Deed (1853)
1	3	2007.34.3.14	Deed (1856)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 4, Money Received by Local Business

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	4	2007.34.4.1	Received Note (1800)
1	4	2007.34.4.2	Received Note (1800)
1	4	2007.34.4.3	Received Note (1808)
1	4	2007.34.4.4	Wheel Carriage Rental (1813)
1	4	2007.34.4.5	Received Note (1815)
1	4	2007.34.4.6	Wheel Carriage Rental (1815)
1	4	2007.34.4.7	Received Note (1816)
1	4	2007.34.4.8	Received Note (1831)
1	4	2007.34.4.9	Received Note (1839)
1	4	2007.34.4.10	John Green, Dr. (1842)
1	4	2007.34.4.11	Milk (1847)
1	4	2007.34.4.12	Milk (1848)
1	4	2007.34.4.13	Palladium (1853)
1	4	2007.34.4.14	Received Note (1853)
1	4	2007.34.4.15	Perry Mason (1868)
1	4	2007.34.4.16	Received Note (1868)
1	4	2007.34.4.17	Received Note (1869)
1	4	2007.34.4.18	Worcester Daily Spy (1873)
1	4	2007.34.4.19	Received Note (1874)
1	4	2007.34.4.20	Agricultural Ware House (1876)

1	4	2007.34.4.21	Horse Shoeing (1876)
1	4	2007.34.4.22	Mass Ploughman (1877)
1	4	2007.34.4.23	Mass Ploughman (1877)
1	4	2007.34.4.24	Mass Ploughman (1879)
1	4	2007.34.4.25	Received Note (1880)
1	4	2007.34.4.26	Received Note (1887)
1	4	2007.34.4.27	F.W. Brigham (1890)
1	4	2007.34.4.28	Received Note (No Date)
1	4	2007.34.4.29	Received Note (No Date)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 5, Tax Material

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	5	2007.34.5.1	School and Parish Tax (1840)
1	5	2007.34.5.2	City, County, and State Tax (1888)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 6, Bank Notes

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	6	2007.34.6.1	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1851)
1	6	2007.34.6.2	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1870)
1	6	2007.34.6.3	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1871)
1	6	2007.34.6.4	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1871)
1	6	2007.34.6.5	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1875)
1	6	2007.34.6.6	Worcester County Institution for Savings (1875)
1	6	2007.34.6.7	Worcester Country Institution for Savings (1876)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 7, Financial Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	7	2007.34.7.1	Customer Records (1814)
1	7	2007.34.7.2	Record (1816)
1	7	2007.34.7.3	Record (1823)
1	7	2007.34.7.4	Yearly Expenses (1826)
1	7	2007.34.7.5	Bank Account Information (1828)
1	7	2007.34.7.6	Yearly Expenses (1835)
1	7	2007.34.7.7	Record (1839)
1	7	2007.34.7.8	Record (1841)
1	7	2007.34.7.9	Record (1846)
1	7	2007.34.7.10	Checkbook (1872)
1	7	2007.34.7.11	Record (?)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 8, Money

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	8	2007.34.8.1	Augusta Savings Bank Dollar (1861)
1	8	2007.34.8.2	Confederate Fifty Dollar Bill (1861)
1	8	2007.34.8.3	Confederate Dollar (1862)
1	8	2007.34.8.4	Confederate Dollar (1862)
1	8	2007.34.8.5	Confederate Hundred Dollar Bill (1863)
1	8	2007.34.8.6	Confederate Ten Dollar Bill (1864)
1	8	2007.34.8.7	German Mark (1923)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 9, Deeds Through Family

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	9	2007.34.9.1	Deed (1824)
1	9	2007.34.9.2	Deed (1841)
1	9	2007.34.9.3	Deed (1843)
1	9	2007.34.9.4	Deed (1841)
1	9	2007.34.9.5	Deed (1841)
1	9	2007.34.9.6	Deed (?)
1	9	2007.34.9.7	Deed for Chaise and Harness (?)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 10, Money Owed to Curtis Family

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	10	2007.34.10.1	Hand-Written Bill (1810)
1	10	2007.34.10.2	Hand-Written Bill (1835)
1	10	2007.34.10.3	Hand-Written Bill (1853)
1	10	2007.34.10.4	Printed Bill (1881)
1	10	2007.34.10.5	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.6	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.7	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.8	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.9	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.10	Printed Bill (1882)
1	10	2007.34.10.11	Printed Bill (1883)
1	10	2007.34.10.12	Printed Bill (1883)
1	10	2007.34.10.13	Mail-Delivered Bill (1878)
1	10	2007.34.10.14	Printed Bill (1879)
1	10	2007.34.10.15	Blank Printed Bill (?)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 11, Photographs

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	11	2007.34.11.1	Photograph of Horace Greely
1	11	2007.34.11.2	Photographs of Homestead
1	11	2007.34.11.3	Photograph of Church Pulpit

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 12, Court Proceedings

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	12	2007.34.12.1	Probate Office (1842)
1	12	2007.34.12.2	Probate Court (1842)
1	12	2007.34.12.3	Probate Office (1842)
1	12	2007.34.12.4	Probate Court (1842)
1	12	2007.34.12.5	Probate Office (1842)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 13, Certifications

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	13	2007.34.13.1	Load of Hard Wood (1844)
1	13	2007.34.13.2	Load of Dark Wood (1844)
1	13	2007.34.13.3	Load of Hard Wood (1845)
1	13	2007.34.13.4	Load of Hard, Dry Wood (1846)
1	13	2007.34.13.5	Load of Hay (1855)
1	13	2007.34.13.6	Load of Hard Wood (1855)
1	13	2007.34.13.7	Load of Hard Wood (1856)
1	13	2007.34.13.8	Load of Hay (1873)
1	13	2007.34.13.9	Load of Hay (1873)
1	13	2007.34.13.10	Load of Hard Wood (1874)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 14, School Essays

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	14	2007.34.14.1	Essay on King Phillip's War
1	14	2007.34.14.2	Writing Exercise

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 15, Elections to Societies

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	15	2007.34.15.1	Election to Agricultural Society (1852)
1	15	2007.34.15.2	Society of Sons of American Rev. (1926)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 16, Letters from the City of Worcester

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	16	2007.34.16.1	Letter (1813)
1	16	2007.34.16.2	Letter (1835)
1	16	2007.34.16.3	Letter (1849)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 17, Saved Letters

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	17	2007.34.17.1	To "My Dear Nephew" (1829)
1	17	2007.34.17.2	From Tyler (1836)
1	17	2007.34.17.3	Letter (1840)
1	17	2007.34.17.4	Letter (1844)
1	17	2007.34.17.5	To "My Dear Mary" (1863)
1	17	2007.34.17.6	To "Respected Friends"
1	17	2007.34.17.7	From Tyler
1	17	2007.34.17.8	To Nellie

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 18, Late Family Exchanges

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	18	2007.34.18.1	From Fred Sickler (1939)
1	18	2007.34.18.2	From Fred Sickler (1939)
1	18	2007.34.18.3	From Fred Sickler (1939)
1	18	2007.34.18.4	From Fred Sickler (1939)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 19, Family Announcements

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	19	2007.34.19.1	Family Death (1825)
1	19	2007.34.19.2	Aunt Heywood Death (1861)
1	19	2007.34.19.3	John Curtis Historical Museum (1994)
1	19	2007.34.19.4	Philip Curtis Wedding Announcement

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 20, Newspaper Material

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	20	2007.34.20.1	Mass. Spy (1818)
1	20	2007.34.20.2	Mass. Ploughman (1877)
1	20	2007.34.20.3	Article: "About Corn" (1897)
1	20	2007.34.20.4	Article: "Tanning Sheep Skins" (?)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 21, Newspaper Clippings

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	21	2007.34.21.1	Albert Curtis Obituary (1898)
1	21	2007.34.21.2	E.J. Curtis Obituary (1926)
1	21	2007.34.21.3	E.P. Curtis Obituary (1931)
1	21	2007.34.21.4	Charles S. Curtis Article (1940?)
1	21	2007.34.21.5	Article on Ephraim Curtis Marker (1958?)
1	21	2007.34.21.6	Article on Ephraim Curtis Marker (1958)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 22, Saved Written Material

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	22	2007.34.22.1	Report by Sir Neville Henderson (1939)
1	22	2007.34.22.2	Second Congregational Church Write-up (?)

Curtis Family Collection
2007.34
Series 23, Miscellaneous

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	23	2007.34.23.1	Baker Box Company Invoice (1899)
1	23	2007.34.23.2	Letter to John W. Bradshaw (1910)
1	23	2007.34.23.3	Letter to Mel Bradshaw (1966)
1	23	2007.34.23.4	Letter to Mel Bradshaw (1968)
1	23	2007.34.23.5	Scribble (?)
1	23	2007.34.23.6	Envelope Addressed to Wyatt Thompson (?)
1	23	2007.34.23.7	Envelope Addressed to R.M. Bradshaw (?)