

WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts

ARCHIVES 2012.FIA.10

John W. Wetherell Papers
Collection

Processd by Robert Iafolla
August 2012

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Collection Information

Abstract : Business, Military and Personal letters and papers of John W. Wetherell and his wife, Hester Newton Wetherell

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

Preferred Citation : Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance:

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

Historical/Biographical Notes

John W. Wetherell and Hester Newton Wetherell were related to some of Worcester's most prominent nineteenth century families. Born in 1821 and 1823 respectively, they resided in a house on State Street after their marriage. John, in addition to other business interests, was a lawyer with his own law practice in the city, and between them John and Hester also owned a large amount of property in Worcester and elsewhere in central Massachusetts. One such property was on Newton Hill, which was sold to the city in 1888 and incorporated into Elm Park. John also had strong connections with Boston, where he served as an aide to Governor John Andrew during the Civil War, and was involved in the Republican Party politics. Hester, for her part, was heavily involved in many Worcester organizations, including the Worcester Children's Friendly Society, of which she was the treasurer for many years. John Wetherell died in 1897 after a quiet retirement spent mostly in Worcester, and Hester followed him two years later. Though the couple had no surviving children, she made provision in her will for numerous Worcester institutions, friends and relatives.

Scope and Content

The collection includes the papers of John W. Wetherell and his wife Hester Newton Wetherell, primarily from the 1860's, but extending from the 1840's to the 1890's. Most of the material relating to Hester, however, is drawn from the Kinnicutt Family Papers (1973.11) and were moved from that collection to this one. Within the collection are letters and documents relating to the business activities of John W. Wetherell and his wife Hester, including financial and property matters, as well as a few legal issues. Additionally, it contains many letters relating to Colonel Wetherell's service as an aide de camp on the staff of the Governor of Massachusetts during the Civil War, mostly from petitioners seeking his influence to obtain an appointment as an officer. Furthermore, there is an assortment of papers relating to the organizational involvement, political activity and social engagements of both John and Hester. Finally, there is a notebook containing the records of John's tenure as a Justice of the Peace during the 1850's, and another with court records from the 1870's and some material on the history of Brookfield.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Letters relating to John W. Wetherell's Civil War service on the staff of the Governor of Massachusetts

Series 2: Letters relating to John W. Wetherell's business, property and financial engagements

Series 3: Papers relating to John W. Wetherell's social engagements

Series 4: Letters relating to John W. Wetherell's organizational involvement

Series 5: Miscellaneous personal correspondence

Series 6: Material drawn from the Kinnicutt Family Papers collection relating to both John and his wife, Hester Newton Wetherell, including some from before their marriage

Series 7: Two notebooks about legal matters and local history

John W. Wetherell Papers Collection
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Series 1, Military Papers 1861-1865

Sub-series 1: Military Invitations and Events

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.1	Letter from A.J. Browne, Private Secretary to the governor, inviting Wetherell to a meeting in Boston about military preparations - February 2, 1861
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.2	Invitation from the governor to attend a drill of the Boston Light Artillery – February 8, 1861
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.3	Invitation from Jeor B. Sargent to attend a drill of the Salem Light Infantry – April 6, 1861
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.4	Invitation to a dinner at the Parker House, Boston, in honor of Commodore Hudson from Lt. Colonel Harrison Ritchie– May 19, 1862
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.5	Invitation to a drill of the Highland Cadets at Mechanics Hall from L.B. Metcalf – March 18, 1864
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.6	Letter about arrangements for the reception of the 15 th Regiment in Worcester – June 23, 1864
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.7	Invitation from Jeremiah Brown to an excursion of the Adjutant Generals of the loyal states in Boston Harbor – July 11, 1865
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.8	Order from the governor to attend an event in Cambridge – July 1865
1	1	2012.FIA.10.1.1.9	Letter Regarding arrangements for a military reception – undated

Sub-Series 2: Misc. Official Correspondence

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.1	Letter from Oliver James Lee about a military pardon issued by the Governor – Nov 18, 1863
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.2	Letter from Governor Andrew about the military dress code of his staff at official events – December 24, 1863
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.3	Letter to Wetherell in reply to his request to have Colonel Prouty's company assigned to garrison duty - April 20, 1864
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.4	Military letter from Gov. Andrew– April 22, 1864
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.5	Letter from Alexander Bullock regarding Wetherell's discussion with the governor about Dr. Hitchcock – August 29, 1864
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.6	Letter instructing Wetherell to pass a note on to Colonel Babbitt, by order of the governor – December 12, 1864
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.7	Letter from the governor's office requesting help in obtaining the casualty lists of officers in the 25 th , 34 th and 36 th regiments – January 2, 1865
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.8	Letter from and response to Charles Learey of Worcester about an official misunderstanding over enlistment in coast defense forces Aug 6, 18654
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.9	Barely Legible Letter from Gov. Andrew– undated
1	2	2012.FIA.10.1.2.9	Barely Legible Letter from Gov. Andrew– undated

Sub-Series 3: Personnel Matters, Requests for Assistance in Receiving Appointments or Promotion

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.1	Letter from Alexander Bullock supporting Edwin Morse for the position of Lieutenant in the 36 th Regiment – August 14, 1862
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.2	Letter from Henry Chapin recommending a friend to be commissioned a lieutenant – September 20, 1862
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.3	Letter briefly describing the involvement of the 15 th Regiment at Antietam and asking for the expedited promotion of James Fletcher to 2 nd Lieutenant – October 2, 1862
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.4	Letter from Horace Very asking for help in getting a commission from the governor – October 10, 1862
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.5	Letter from Horace Wakefield about the promotion of John B. Fairbank of the 36 th Regiment – February 13, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.6	Letter from Joseph Bird in thanks for help in receiving his commission as an officer – February 15, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.7	Letter from Joseph Bird asking for help in resolving difficulties surrounding his resignation and discharge – May 14, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.8	Letter from the Adjutant General in response to a recommendation from Wetherell - June 9, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.9	Letter to the Surgeon General requesting that wounded soldier Charles Hyde be discharged and allowed to come home to Worcester with reply on reverse side saying this was not presently possible – August 29, 1863

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.10	Letter from W.H. Sanford to Governor Andrew about his son's commission – September 18, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.11	Letter from Myron Sanford son in thanks for help in obtaining his commission – December 21, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.12	Letter from Myron Sanford stating that the post to which he was assigned had already been filled and asking for help in resolving the situation – February 6, 1864
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.13	Letter from Myron Sanford saying he has found another post – February 22, 1864
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.14	Letter regarding a military appointment from Mr. Lee – October 5, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.15	Letter from Edward Lee asking for advice on obtaining a promotion – October 24, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.16	Letter from Frank Wetherell asking for help in obtaining an appointment as a clerk on the Ordnance Board – October 15, 1863
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.17	Letter from the War Department to the governor confirming his request for the discharge of private Sanford from Slothe's Illinois Battery – Dec 22, 1863 (2 copies)
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.18	Letter from a Worcester man asking for medical accommodations for his son – April 6, 1864
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.19	Letter from the governor asking for character references for certain officers – May 2, 1864

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.20	Letter from William Lowe of Springfield asking for confirmation that his brother in law is dead and not a prisoner of war – Sept 29, 1864
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.20	Letter to Jeanette Babbitt of Worcester from Governor Andrew explaining that men who enlist in the army cannot stipulate that they will only serve within Massachusetts – December 12, 1864
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.21	Letter from and Reply to Stephen Brown of Oxford asking for advice in a military legal case - Jan 23, 25 1865
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.22	Letter from Galvin Perry asking that his son, Frederick Perry, be appointed a deputy constable – July 21, 1865
1	3	2012.FIA.10.1.3.23	Letter from A.H. Bullock asking for help in obtaining a commission for acting Lieutenant William Howe of the 36 th regiment – undated

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Series 2, Business and property letters 1861-65, with short notebook for 1872-1896

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.1	Two Letters from Benjamin Boynton of Westborough regarding Mortgages on the Property of Samuel Chamberlin - November 2, 1861
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.2	Letter from A.H. Dana about collecting a debt owed by John D. Hudson of Oxford - March 3, 1862
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.3	Letter from Worcester City Charcoal Yard - March 3, 1862
1	7	2012.FIA.10.2.4	Letter from the Central Bank about a vote to reduce their capital stock - April 28, 1862

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.5	Letter from and Reply to J.F. Haxon of Paxton about a financial matter - March 18 and 25 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.6	Letter from J. Henry Hill, Secretary of the Worcester County Institution for Savings, announcing appointment of Wetherell as a member of the corporation - April 1, 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.7	Letter to and reply from William Hooper, Washington DC, about a business matter - May 7 and 8, 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.8	Letter from Stephen Salisbury Jr. about subscribing to the \$450 fund - August 24, 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.9	Letter from and Reply to J.W. Newton & Co. of New York about their change in status - July 25 and September 16 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.10	Two Letters to and replies from J.W. Newton & Co. about purchasing bonds - October 8-27 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.11	Letter asking for money owed from the estate of Joseph Lewis from George Richardson of Lowell - October 19, 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.12	Three Letters from Daniel Wilder about Mrs Wilder's account at the Institution for Savings - November 16 and December 2 1863
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.13	Letter from Lee Higginson & CO of Boston about Railroad Shares - January 21, 1865
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.14	Letter to and Reply from James Newton of New York about a bond issue and also a personal note about Uncle Newton's injury - January 26 and 27, 1864
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.15	Letter from Samuel Davies about a debt - July 13, 1865
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.16	Two Letters from and one Reply to Ezekiel Davies about a debt - July 22, August 11 and 21, 1865

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.17	Letter from F.W. Whipple of Sutton about a business matter - August 26, 1864
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.18	Two letters from Priest about business and property matters – August 31 and September 16, 1864
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.19	Letter from Sam Johnson of Southborough about trouble paying rent - December 13, 1864
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.20	Letter from Treasurer's office of Massachusetts about a change in the law regarding the holding of stocks by guardians and executors
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.21	Plan of buildings at 28 Pleasant St
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.22	Five letters from M.L. Dickinson of Brattleboro about bill payments
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.23	Advertisement for cheap coal from the Charter Oak Mutual Coal Company of Hartford
1	4	2012.FIA.10.2.24	Notebook containing a record of various business and real estate deals, along with some other observations - 1872-1896

Sub-Series 1: Groton Property Letters 1861-1865

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	5	2012.FIA.10.2.1.1	Series of 23 letters relating to rents and upkeep of property in Groton, MA

Sub-Series 2: Beverly Gas Company Stock Letters 1862-1864

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	6	2012.FIA.10.2.2.1	Series of 17 letters relating to the sale of shares in the Beverly Gas Company to W.R. Ward of New York

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Series 3, Event Invitations and Programs 1862-1865

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.1	Invitation to dinner at the Parker House with Governor Andrew - January 25, 1861
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.2	Yale Commencement Programs - 1862, 1863, 1865
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.3	Invitation to dinner at the Parker House with Governor Andrew - May 2, 1863
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.4	Invitations to Boston July 4 celebrations - 1863, 1864
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.5	Invitation of Gov. Andrew to Holy Cross Commencement, July 3 1863 and invitation for Wetherell to accompany Gov to Tufts commencement - July 4, 1863
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.6	Invitation to Reception in Boston for George Thompson - February 20, 1864
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.7	Invitation to meeting of the Grand Council of the Massachusetts U.C.A. in Boston - May 4, 1864
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.8	Invitation and program for the 25 th anniversary of the state Normal School, Framingham - June 1, 1864
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.9	Invitation to commemoration of the life of Edward Everett in Cambridge - February 15, 1865
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.10	Invitation to commemoration of Harvard students who served in the Civil War - July 21, 1865
1	7	2012.FIA.10.3.11	Invitation to dinner at the Parker House from the Independent Corps of Cadets - undated

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Series 4, Organizational Involvement 1862-1864

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	8	2012.FIA.10.4.1	Three letters from William Washburn of Greenfield about Republican Party politics - May 8, 12, 13 1862
1	8	2012.FIA.10.4.2	Seven items relating to the organization and activities of the Union Club of Boston - 1863-1864
1	8	2012.FIA.10.4.3	Two letters relating to Wetherell's Worcester Church involvement – April 18, May 9, 1864

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Series 5, Misc. Personal Correspondance1862-1864

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.1	Letter from the new publishers of the law reporter - February 5, 1862
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.2	Letter from Henry Shumway of Oxford asking Wetherell to use his influence to help him obtain the post of deputy collector of taxes - May 4, 1862
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.3	Letter from Harrison Ritvhiie asking how Wetherell is doing after a long time with no communication - November 1, 1862
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.4	Letter From J. Kennan - June 23, 1863
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.5	Letter from Rev Langdon about a case involving child custody in Millbury - May 4, 1864
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.6	Letter from James Green asking for a copy of Governor Andrew's account of Massachusetts' involvement in the Civil War- January 11, 1865

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.7	Letter from George W. Newton asking for help in keeping his position at the Navy Department while he is absent to inspect property in North Carolina -August 25, 1865
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.7	Letter from J.B. Hacker asking for a character reference of Ezekiel Dimon – December 12, 1866
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.8	Two letters from Mary Wallace about family matters - February 3, 1867 and December 31, 1868
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.9	Letter from Charles Gibson, manager of the Boston Female Asylum, asking for a character reference for Mrs. H of Grafton who wished to take one of the girls into her own home
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.10	Letter from A. Browne of Salem asking for help in obtaining lodgings in the Bay State House for a convention
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.11	Letter from G.E. Lawrence - undated
1	9	2012.FIA.10.5.12	Note from John Davies - undated

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Series 6, Papers of John Wetherell and Hester Newton Wetherell, Extracted from the
Kinnicutt Family Papers Collection 1973.11

Subseries 1: Invitations, Social Events and Calling Cards

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.1	Four calling cards or invitations to local social events addressed to Hester
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.2	Invitation for John to dine with some gentlemen of Boston at the Revere House – September 23, 1861

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.3	Invitation for Lieut. Colonel Wetherell and 2 ladies to a Washington's Birthday ball given by the Roxbury Reserve Guard – February 22, 1864
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.4	Invitation to the anniversary celebration of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company – June 6, 1864
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.5	Massachusetts State Dinner menu – January 3, 1866
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.6	Invitation from Lt. Col. John Jeffries Jr. – February 18, 1870
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.7	Invitation to dinner from the Governor – March 15, 1870
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.8	Undated summons from the Governor
1	10	2012.FIA.10.6.1.9	Twelve miscellaneous envelopes

Subseries 2: Assorted Personal Letters

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	11	2012.FIA.10.6.2.1	Letter to Hester from John – February 26, 1863
1	11	2012.FIA.10.6.2.2	Letter to Hester from a cousin thanking her for sending a photograph – March 17, 1880
1	11	2012.FIA.10.6.2.3	Letter to Hester from a Newton relative describing a trip from Boston to Bangor – undated
1	11	2012.FIA.10.6.2.4	Letter to Hester from a Lincoln relative asking her to visit – undated
1	11	2012.FIA.10.6.5	Letter to Hester from Pliny E. Chase – undated

Subseries 3: Business, Legal and Financial Papers

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.1	Bill for a table ordered by Hester Newton from Samuel Gilbert – November 9, 1846

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.2	Statement confirming Hester Newton has paid \$1500 toward the construction of a new house on State St. – May 23, 1852
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.3	Marriage Contract between John Wetherell and Mary B. Johnson – 1864
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.4	Copy of an agreement to donate a piece of land on Newton Hill to the city for use as a park – 1888
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.5	Land Transfer agreement between Hester Newton Wetherell and Frederick White for a plot on pleasant street adjacent to the property of Lucius W. Briggs – June 3, 1898
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.6	Two medical bills of Hester Newton Wetherell – September 1899
1	12	2012.FIA.10.6.3.7	Newton Family property paper – undated

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Series 7, Notebooks

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	13	2012.FIA.10.7.1	Justice of the Peace Record Book, with entries for marriages, fines, debt settlements and minor civil cases – 1849-1858
1	13	2012.FIA.10.7.2	Boston Court Records Notebook from 1871, also contains a few notes about Brookfield History from 1881