

Collection #  
M 0148

## DANIEL WAIT HOWE PAPERS, 1824–1930

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### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	4 manuscript boxes, 2 folders of visual materials
COLLECTION DATES:	1824–1930
PROVENANCE:	Kathryn Tyler, Indianapolis, Indiana, 17 April 1987
RESTRICTIONS:	None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 0000.0130; 1987.0357

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

**Daniel Wait Howe** (1839–1921) was a prominent lawyer, judge, and historian, as well as president of the Indiana Historical Society between 1901 and 1920. Born in Patriot, Switzerland County, Indiana, he was the son of Daniel Haven Howe (1811–1841). The elder Howe, originally from West Bloomfield, New York, was a lumber merchant who moved to Indiana in the late 1830s, when he met and married Lucy Hicks (1816–1904). When young Daniel was slightly more than one year old, his father died. In 1849 Lucy married Samuel P. Oyler. Howe graduated from Franklin College in 1857 and taught school while studying law.

Upon the advent of the Civil War in 1861, Howe enlisted as a private in the Seventh Indiana Regiment, serving three months in West Virginia. He re-enlisted on 14 August 1862, after his first duty had ended. Commissioned as first lieutenant (and later promoted to captain) in the 79th Indiana Regiment, he served continuously for two years. Howe took part in several battles of the western theatre including Carrick's Ford, Stone's River, Chickamauga, and received an official commendation for bravery at Missionary Ridge. His duty was abruptly ended on 23 June 1864 by a wound that landed him in an army hospital near Chattanooga.

After the war he completed his law studies at Albany Law School, passed the bar exam in 1867, and entered partnership with his stepfather, Col. Samuel P. Oyler, in Franklin. He also served as city attorney and, in 1868–69, state prosecutor. In 1871 he married Inez Hamilton of Greensburg and two years later moved to Indianapolis, where he formed a partnership with Charles Byfield. He served as judge of the Superior Court of Marion County between 1876 and 1890. Upon retirement from the bench he resumed his law practice.

Howe maintained an active interest in history throughout his life. He wrote several critically acclaimed books, including *Puritan Republic* (1899), concerning Massachusetts Bay Colony during the Puritan era; *Civil War Times* (1902), drawn largely from his own experience and described as judicious and impartial by both the northern and southern press at its publication; and *Political History of Secession* (1914), which examines the antebellum secessionist movement.

Besides being a member and president of the Indiana Historical Society, Howe belonged to an array of organizations including the New England Historic-Genealogical Society, the Indianapolis Bar Association (president in 1904), and the Indianapolis Literary Club. He was a Knight-Templar and a thirty-second degree Mason and Scottish Rite, as well as a member of the Grand Army of the Republic. Howe died 28 October 1921.

**Samuel P. Oyler**, the stepfather of Daniel Wait Howe, was born 29 August 1819 in Hawkhurst, England. He immigrated to the United States in 1834, settling in Rochester, New York, before moving on to Tippecanoe County, Indiana, in 1849. That same year, on 6 December, he married for the second time. His wife, Lucy Hicks Howe of Franklin, was a widow with one son, Daniel. Samuel and Lucy had no children.

With the eruption of the Civil War, Oyler enlisted first as major with the Seventh Indiana Regiment, serving three months in West Virginia in 1862, and re-enlisted in Company I of the 79th Indiana, this time as lieutenant-colonel. With this outfit he took part in the battles of Chattanooga, Missionary Ridge, and Chickamauga, as well as in the Atlanta campaign. His stepson served as captain in the same unit. During the war Oyler kept up a regular correspondence with his wife.

In the decades after the war Oyler, a lawyer, acquired a great deal of real estate in Johnson and Marion counties. Most of the transactions were either outright deals with owners or purchases at auctions. During this time he became prominent as judge, state senator, and mayor of Franklin. On 6 September, 1898, Oyler died of complications from a paralytic stroke.

Sources:

Information in collection.

*Who Was Who In America*, vol. 1, p. 595 (E 176 .w64 v. 1).

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Daniel Wait Howe papers consist of Civil War correspondence of Howe and his stepfather, Samuel P. Oyler, typescripts of his Civil War diary, drafts of his historical writings, and other miscellaneous writings and family papers.

During the war Howe and Oyler wrote to Lucy Howe Oyler, who was home in Franklin, Indiana. The rate of correspondence was frequent and resulted in a voluminous collection of letters that forms the heart of the Howe papers. Samuel wrote more often to his wife than did Daniel, including daily accounts of his experience with the 79th Indiana Regiment and detailing the movement of Union and rebel troops. He offered his opinion of commanders—Federal and Confederate—as well as his thoughts on Northern politics of the time. Each letter is also largely devoted to news of his and Daniel's physical and mental well-being, with expressions of concern over Lucy's health and happiness. Samuel's letters cover the war from September 1862 through December 1863, most of them falling between July and December of the latter year.

Daniel's letters, though less frequent, cover a broader portion of the war years: September 1862 through November 1864. The letters are typical of any young man, foregoing the sentimental (except in only the most dire or depressing circumstances) and tending more toward enthusiastic descriptions of soldiery, interspersed with lists of necessities he wished his mother to send.

Both sets of correspondence reflect the movement of Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland, which included the 79th Indiana, from Kentucky through the Tennessee campaign and on to Georgia under Sherman's command. Howe received a leg wound during the Battle of Kenesaw Mountain in June 1864, which landed him in an army hospital near Chattanooga. It is from here that the last group of letters originates.

Throughout his second enlistment Howe also kept a diary recording his daily activities. This collection includes typed transcripts of the diary, but not the original diary. Entries in the diary begin 26 September 1862 and continue through 10 August 1864, when he was mustered out of the Union army. Small memorandum books were used to record the entries for 1862 and 1863, allowing three days to a page; larger books were used in 1864, with a full page allotted for each day's entry. As a result Howe's writings for the latter year include considerably more detail. Besides the typescript of the diary is a narrative version by Howe, interspersed with excerpts of entries from November 1863 through April 1864. Also included is the typescript of a diary kept by one of Howe's fellow officers in the 79th, Lt. William Henry Huntzinger. In the collection are the early typescripts, as well as later typed transcriptions, of Huntzinger's diary from August 1862 through June 1865. The originals, though missing two pages (included in the copies), also contain notes, presumably written by Howe in anticipation of publishing the work. Both the typescript of Huntzinger's diary and Howe's narrative were acquired as a gift in 1987, separately from the other typescripts.

Later in life Howe became known for his historical writings, including *Puritan Republic* (1899), concerning Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony, and *Political History of Secession* (1914), which examines antebellum secessionist sentiment. Typescripts, research notes, and revisions of these, along with drafts of an unpublished work titled "History of the Army of the Cumberland" form the bulk of the collection from Howe's postwar career.

Various other papers include newspaper clippings on Howe and Oyler; certificates from Howe's military and political careers; limited biographical information on Howe and his mother, with genealogical information on the family of Howe's wife, Inez Hamilton Howe; courtship correspondence between Howe and his wife (May 1870–May 1871); and memorials and correspondence concerning Howe's death in 1921. Also included are the papers of Howe's father, Daniel Haven Howe, consisting of an assortment of documents and correspondence between 1824 and 1841.

The collection was acquired in two groups. The historical writings and notes were acquired from an unknown source, probably in the 1930s. The Civil War correspondence and family papers were a gift in 1987 from Mrs. Kathryn Tyler of Indianapolis.

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## **CATALOGING INFORMATION**

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0148).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.