

**FINDING AID FOR THE SEWARD PAPERS OF THE ROBERT H. CHESEBRO
FAMILY PAPERS**

A. Descriptive Summary:

Title: Seward Papers of Robert H. Chesebro

Dates: 1830-1963

Creators: Frances Alvah Chesebro (12/12/1826-08/21/1909); Frederick William Seward (07/08/1830-04/25/1915); Frances Adeline Seward (12/09/1844-10/29/1866); Lazette Maria Worden Miller (11/01/1803-10/03/1875); Frances Worden Chesebro (02/12/1854-05/23/1931); Margaret Mc Jennett (XXXXX); Robert H. Chesebro (11/05/1881-05/03/1970); Bernice Augusta Race Chesebro (06/22/1887-11/11/1980); William Henry Seward Jr. (06/18/1839-04/29/1920); Janet McNeil Seward (11/18/1839-11/09/1913)

Extent: 1 box (7 folders)

Abstract: The Seward papers within the Robert H. Chesebro Family Papers are the specific materials in direct relation with the members of the Seward family.

Language: Materials are in English

Repository: University of Rochester. Rush Rhees Library. Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation. Rochester, NY 14627-0055

B. Biographical:

Frances Adeline Miller Seward (1805 – June 21, 1865) was born in 1805, the daughter of Judge Elijah Miller and Hannah Foote Miller. She studied at the Troy Female Seminary (now known as Emma Willard School). She married New York attorney William Henry Seward on October 20, 1824, after meeting him through his sister, a classmate, in 1821. In his lifetime, William served as a senator in the New York legislature, Governor of New York, a senator from New York and United States Secretary of State under Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. The couple raised five children: Augustus Henry Seward (1826-1876), Frederick William Seward (1830-1915), Cornelia Seward (1835-1836), William Henry Seward, Jr. (1839-1920) and Frances Adeline "Fanny" Seward (1844-1866). Some

years after his wife's death, in 1870, William formally adopted his companion Olive Risley Seward (1841-1908).

On April 14, 1865, her husband and two of their sons, Frederick and Augustus, and Fanny, were injured in an assassination attempt on her husband in their house.^[1] The man responsible for this ordeal was Lewis Powell a.k.a. Lewis Paine, a conspirator of John Wilkes Booth; Booth had shot and killed President Lincoln the same night. The attack put Frances into a state of great anxiety about her family. She thought that Frederick would die of his injuries, although he survived. She died on June 21, 1865, of a heart attack.¹

Lazette Maria Worden (November 1, 1803-October 3, 1875) was a daughter of Elijah P. Miller, judge in Auburn. With her sister, Frances, she grew up in the family home on South Street. Both Frances and Lazette attended a Quaker school in Aurora in 1817. Lazette Miller married Alvah Worden, and for much of her married life, she lived in Canandaigua. She spent many weeks of every year, however, visiting her sister and brother-in-law, William Henry Seward, in Auburn. In 1856, she returned to Auburn and built this house at 2 Frederick Street, on land inherited from her father. After the death of her sister, Frances, in 1865, Lazette Worden often acted as hostess for her brother-in-law, William Henry Seward, both in Auburn and Washington. The census of 1870 listed her as living alone in Auburn, aged 65 years old, with real estate valued at \$6000 and a personal estate valued at \$10,000. In 1872, she was at William Henry Seward's side when he died after a brief illness. Lazette Worden died October 3, 1875 and was buried in Fort Hill Cemetery, Auburn.²

Frederick William Seward (July 8, 1830-April 25, 1915) attended Union College, graduating in 1849, and served as secretary to his father from 1849 to 1857. He worked as associate editor of the *Albany Evening Journal* edited by Thurlow Weed from 1851 to 1861. When his father was appointed Secretary of State, Frederick became assistant secretary of state, in charge of consular service. After W. H.

¹ Wikipedia entry.

² Wraalstad, Melissa L, "Frances Seward and Lazette Worden: Two Sisters' approaches to Activism", Masters' Thesis. Faculty State University of New York College at Oneonta at its Cooperstown Program, 2002.

Seward was injured in a carriage accident in 1865, Frederick served as acting secretary of state. He was also wounded during the assassination attempt on Seward. Frederick was elected to the New York State Assembly in 1874 and served as assistant United States secretary of state under Rutherford Hayes from 1877 to 1879. Frederick also edited and published his father's autobiography and letters. He married Anna Wharton of Albany, and spent the latter part of his life in a house he built in Montrose, Wetchester County, New York.

William Henry Seward, Jr. (June 18, 1839-April 29, 1920) was educated at home. He became interested in finance and, in partnership with Clinton McDougall, opened a private bank in Auburn in 1861. He abandoned banking in order to fight in the Civil War, where he eventually rose to the rank of brigadier-general. After the war, he returned to banking and lived with his wife, Janet MacNeil (Watson) Seward, in the family homestead in Auburn.

Janet McNeil Seward (November 18, 1839-November 12, 1913) Mrs. Seward, was the wife of General William H. Seward, Jr. Born Janet MacNeil Watson, she was the daughter of Robert Watson (c.1805-1845) and the former Margaret Standart (c.1806-1893). Her father died when she was five years old, but her widowed mother remained in her life for many years, predeceasing her by less than a decade. Mrs. Seward and her husband, who had served as a brigadier general in the Union Army during the American Civil War, resided at the landmark Seward House on South Street in Auburn, NY. After her death General Seward lived on another seven years before joining her here in the Seward Family plot.

Frances Alvah Chesebro (December 12, 1826-August 21, 1909). Daughter of Lazette Maria Worden and Alvah Worden. She married Henry Onderdonk Chesebro (1822-1888), counselor at Law, in October 17, 1850 at St. John's Church in Canandaigua, Ontario County, New York.

Margaret McJennet (unknown) nursemaid for Frank (Frances) Worden Chesebro.

Robert H. Chesebro (1881-1970) Son of Frank Chesebro and Clara L. Chapin. Married Bernice Augusta Race in December 6, 1906.

Bernice Augusta Race Chesebro (1887-1980) Wife of Robert H. Chesebro.

Frances Worden Chesebro (February 12, 1854 - May 23, 1931). Son of Frances Alvah Chesebro and Henry Onderdonk Chesebro. He married Clara L. Chapin (1858-1934).

C. Scope and Contents Note:

The Seward Papers of the Robert H. Chesebro Family Papers collection is a compilation of the materials specifically related to the Seward family within the collection. The documents provide information about the Chesebro and Seward family through manuscript genealogies, a diary and copies of four scrapbooks compiled by Frances Alvah Chesebro, the daughter of Lazette Maria Worden (sister of Frances Adele Seward). The scrapbooks contain letters announcing deaths and births, as well as obituaries from local newspapers, invitations to different events, condolence letters, and *calling cards*. The manuscripts genealogies bring to light information about different members of the Chesebro and the Seward families. There is a specific focus on Henry Onderdonk Chesebro and Lazette Maria Worden, her father, the judge Elijah Miller, her husband Alvah Worden, as well as, her sister Frances Adele Seward. Furthermore there is the diary about the family trip to Nassau (Bahamas) kept by Frank Worden Chesebro nursemaid, Margaret McJannet and the "Fugitive Slaves: Recollections of Underground Railroad" written originally by Frances Alvah Chesebro where the activities of the group in upstate New York are described demonstrating the direct involvement of the Worden family in this abolitionist society.

D. Restrictions of Use and Access:

The collection is accessible for researchers at the Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation Department of the Rush Rhees Library at the University of Rochester under supervision.

E. Index Terms:

Subject- Names

Adams, W. H.	Haley, Elisabeth
Allen, Cornelia Margaret (Serward)	Haley, Laura
Bayley, Charles John. (governor of Bahamas)	Howland, Humphrey
Blossom, Enos	Huson
Bogart, Harriet C.	Jeffrey, H.
Bogart, Nicholas	Kate?
Bosley, Lucrecia	Lees, Elleen
Bull, Mary S	Leland, William W.
Chapin, Robert	Marshall, Anna
Chesebro, A. G.	McClallen, Clarinda
Chesebro, Caroline	McJennet, Margaret
Chesebro, Frances Alvah	McKechnie, John D. M.
Chesebro, Francis Worden	Meredith, Catherine Keppele
Chesebro, H. O.	Meredith, William
Chesebro, Henry Onderdonk	Meredith, William Morris
Cornelius	Miller, Elijah
Day, Helen LeRoy	Miller, Richard
Day, P.	MR. Dill? Pill?
De Zeng, Caroline Cutbush Rees	Pomeroy, Theodore Medad
De Zeng, William Steuben	Richardson, C. A.
Douglass, Charles Remond	Seward, A. H.
Duncombe, Frederick	Seward, Anna M.
Duncombe, Mary Ann Adderly	Seward, Augustus Henry
FAW	Seward, Clarence Amrstrong
FMS	Seward, Frances Adeline Miller
H, Josiah	Seward, Frances Janet
Hake, J.	Seward, Frederick William
Haley, Alfred	Seward, Janet McNeil (as Watson, her maiden name)
	Seward, Janet Watson

Seward, Samuel Sweezey	Farmington, NY
Seward, William H. Jr.	Geneva, NY
Seward, William Henry	Hog Island (now called Paradise
Seward, William Henry	Island), Commonwealth of the
Seward, William Henry III	Bahamas
Seward, William Henry Jr	Jersey City, NJ
Spencer, Elisabeth Scott Smith	London, United Kingdom
Talmadge, G. E.	Nassau, Commonwealth of the
Taylor, Zachary	Bahamas
Thompson, Jane	New York, NY
Thompson, Robert	Saratoga Springs, NY
Thorton, Lawrence	Syracuse, NY
Tubman, Harriet Ross	Washington DC
Underwood, George (Auburn)	
Valentine, Dindanna	
Valentine, Richard	
Williams, George C.	
Worden, Alvah	
Worden, Lazette Maria	
Worden, Lazette Maria Miller	
Words, J. H.	

Subject – Topics

Abolitionist History
 Calling cards
 Correspondence
 Diary
 Domestic life
 Family
 Funeral
 Genealogy
 Underground Railroad
 Women History
 Women Rights

Subject – Places

Astor House
 Auburn, NY
 Cannadaigua

F. Related Materials:

Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation. Rochester University. Rochester, NY

- *William Henry Seward Papers Microform Edition.*

- *William Henry Seward Papers*. Please note: The collection has been microfilmed for preservation purposes, and users will be referred to the microform edition.
- *William Henry Seward Papers Addition*. Materials added to the collection after it was microfilmed in 1981.
- *George M. Crier Papers, 1800-1881*.
- *George Washington Patterson Papers, 1831-1898*.
- *Thurlow Weed Papers, 1816-1894*.
- *The Elijah Miller Papers, 1794-1861*.

G. Administrative Information:

Acquisition and Provenance

Gift. In 1963 Bernice Augusta Chesebro compiled and copied the manuscript genealogies; in 1964 the four scrapbooks were copied from the originals in possession of Bernice Augusta Chesebro and Robert H. Chesebro, and in 1963 Catherine D. Hayes donated Margaret McJennet's diary. Addition to the Collection purchased from Charles Apfelbaum on the FHA Seward Fund in May, 1989.

Finding Aid created by: Almudena Escobar López

Citation

Seward papers of the Robert H. Chesebro Family Papers, Box Number, Folder/Item number or Name, Rush Rhees Library. Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation. Rochester University.

Processing Information

The boxes and folders that are not mentioned but that are part of the Robert H. Chesebro Family Papers do not contain any material related directly to the Seward family. Robert H. Chesebro and Bernice Augusta Chesebro are donors but they also appear as creators because they transcribed some of the documentation from the collection.

K. Container List:

CONTAINER LIST: A.C52 BOX 1

1:1 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Frances (Worden) Chesebro Scrapbook

*Copied from original owned by Robert H. Chesebro, East Boothbay, Maine (Jan, 1964)

- Letter from Frances Adeline Seward to Frances Worden Chesebro. 1856. Condolence letter about Alvah Worden's death.
- Letter from Lazette Maria Miller Worden to Frances Worden Chesebro. November 13, 1851. Lazette communicates the death of Elijah Miller (her father) to her daughter Frances.

1:2 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Frances (Worden) Chesebro Scrapbook

*Copied from original owned by Robert H. Chesebro, East Boothbay, Maine (Jan, 1964): Notices of marriages & deaths of Relatives, Family and Friends of Frances W. Chesebro: "Schools Friends, Quecker ceremony"

- A piece of a letter by Lazette Maria Miller Worden to her daughter Frances Worden Chesebro announcing the death of Helen Le Roy Day (1858-08/05/1863). 1863.
- A note by William Henry Seward Jr to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing the death of Theodore Medad Pomeroy (12/31/1824-03/23/1905). The letter dates from March 24, 1905.
- Genealogical tree for Foote, Parsons, Seward and Beecher (Parsons Memorial Volume, Pub. by D. P. Holton, M. D.). Includes information up to the 1700s about the four families.
- Letter from Janet Mc Neil Seward (signed as Jeanet W. Seward) to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing Harriet C. Bogart's death (1807/11-08/20/1888). August 20, 1888.
- Telegraph from Janet Mc Neil Seward (signed as Jeanet W. Seward) to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing Augustus Henry Seward's death (10/01/1826-09/11/1876). September 11, 1876.
- Obituary of Frederick William Seward (07/08/1830-04/25/1915).
- Note by Lazette Maria Worden to her daughter Frances Worden Chesebro announcing Clarinda McClallen's death (1794-09/05/1862). September 5, 1862.
- Obituary of Clarinda McClallen.
- Obituary of Frances Adeline Miller Seward (06/26/1865).

1:3 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Frances (Worden) Chesebro Scrapbook

*Copied from original owned by Robert H. Chesebro, East Boothbay, Maine (Jan, 1964). There are *calling cards*, notes, invitations to Frances W. Chesebro (dates, 1830, 1840, 1844-1881).

- Invitation to Frances Worden Chesebro to assist to the U.S. Corps of Cadets Annual Ball. August 1846. It goes together with a permission note for Augustus Henry Seward to accompany her cousin. Augustus 9, 1844.

1:4 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Frances (Worden) Chesebro Scrapbook

*Copied from original owned by Robert H. Chesebro, East Boothbay, Maine (Jan, 1964) from 1881-early 1900s. *Calling cards*, letters.

- Letter from William Henry Junior to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing the birth of his daughter Frances Janet Seward (07/13/1880-09/02/1957). July 13, 1880.

- Letter from Frederick William Seward to Frances Worden Chesebro congratulating her for becoming a "greatgrandmother". October 26, 1907.

- Wedding invitation for Cornelia Margaret and Frederick Innis Allen wedding from Mr and Mrs William Henry Seward for June 3, 1884.

- Letter from Janet McNeil Seward to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing the birth of a boy from her daughter Cornelia Margaret. May 22, [1884].

- Letter from Cornelia Margaret Allen to Frances Worden Chesebro. Christmas, 1887.

- Letter from Frances Adeline Seward to Frances Worden Chesebro announcing the birth of William Henry Seward III. May 5, 1864.

- Letter from Clarence Armstrong Seward to Frances Worden Chesebro before he died in July. June 30, 1897.

1:5 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Genealogy and Family Records

4 handwritten transcriptions of Frances Chesebro personal notes (Mrs. Henry O. Chesebro's records)

3 photocopies: Biography of William Chesebrough (This was copied by Ron Allan in the Boston Public Library in 1935; 19351030Steward_parents and William Cesebrough bio entry form a book.

Notes:

Group 1: biography notes for William Chesebrough

Group 2: Alvah Worden notes: Nathan Worden and Sarah Pulling (parents of Alvah)- anecdotes about Alvah's relationship with Elijah Miller and Lazette. She describes Miller as terrifying and cruel. "I grew up in deadly fear of my grandfather who never recognized my presence until I was a big girl and then by giving me a good scolding for some trivial fault"

"my mother was an independent person as was shown by her walking out of her father's house and marrying my father"

"My father loved books, music, flowers, fields and woods and all domestic animals. My pleasantest memories are associated with my walks and [illegible] with him"

Group 3: Family account of the Millers, Lazette and Alvah,

Group 4: "family records of his ancestors compiled for him from reliable papers"

Jan 1901: Miller-Bordens-Chesebro-Chapin. Elijah Miller life; again about Lazette; tells the story of Lazette and Frances as little girls, and their moves to different places and their education in different schools including the Troy seminar, Aurora,

Photocopies: Biography of William Chesebro. "This is copied by our Ron Allan in the Boston Public Library" (4 pages); Letter 1935 (nothing to do with the Swards).

1:6 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Mc. Jennett diary, 1859-60 of trip to Nassau, Bahamas

1:7 A.C52 Chesebro (Robert) Family Paper Frances (Worden) Chesebro, "Fugitive Slaves:Recollections of Underground Railroad"