



Guide to the John Dudley Family Papers, 1727-1853

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

John Dudley Family Papers, 1727-1853

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
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Collection Number:

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Author of Finding Aid:

Unidentified; reformatted and updated by Korrena Cowing

Creator:

Dudley, John, 1725-1805

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

2 boxes ; 0.63 linear feet

Abstract:

The John Dudley Family Papers, 1727 to 1853, include appointments, commissions, correspondence, deeds, probate records, and Revolutionary War papers for several members of the Dudley family of Exeter and Raymond, NH.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The John Dudley Family Papers are comprised of two donations. Accession 1926.004 was donated by Mrs. Christine D. Foster in May 1926. Accession 1970.021 was donated by Mrs. Kenneth L. Hoffman on June 17, 1970.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by an unidentified person at an unknown date. The finding aid was written by an unidentified person at an unknown date and reformatted and updated by Korrena Cowing in June 2020. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The materials in this collection are paper based and have no special technical requirements for use.

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Preferred Citation:

Item title, John Dudley Family Papers, 1926.004. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

John Dudley was born April 9, 1725, at Exeter, NH, the son of James and Mercy (Folsom) Dudley. He had little public education and worked as a farm hand with David Gilman of Exeter, where he learned much by listening and talking with others. He was Exeter town selectman from 1760 to 1765. He moved to Raymond and focused on farming and lumber. In 1768 he became a Justice of the Peace. In 1775 he was chosen as part of the Provincial Congresses, the Committee of Safety and Justice of the Court of Common Pleas 1776–1784, Speaker of the House 1782–1783, and Superior Court judge 1784–1797.

On June 22, 1749, John married Elizabeth Gilman, born August 7, 1725, to Caleb and Susanna (Folsom) Gilman. John and Elizabeth's children were: Betsey born 1750, died young; John born 1751, died young; John (1754–1828); Elizabeth born May 18, 1756; Susanna (1759–1853);

James born October 4, 1761; Nathaniel born November 25, 1763; Moses born January 29, 1766. John Sr. died at Raymond May 21, 1805. Elizabeth died there May 13, 1806.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The John Dudley Family Papers document the Dudley family of Exeter and Raymond, NH, and consist primarily of the business and personal papers of John and Moses Dudley, with additional papers from other family members, dating from 1727 to 1853. The papers detail the family's legal, business, military, personal, and political activities, containing everything from personal correspondence, Revolutionary War documents, land deeds, and documents relating to Moses Dudley's work as justice of the peace. Many notable New Hampshire figures are represented in this collection. See Appendix 2 for a full list of names.

The genealogical and biographical material includes ornamented family charts of John Dudley and Moses Dudley by George Melvill [transferred to the museum], as well as correspondence with Jacob Bailey Moore and John Kelly. The wills and estates folder includes the will of Stephen Dudley (1734/5) and a return of the committee appointed to set off a widow's dower for Hannah Dudley (1751), widow of Trueworthy Dudley. There are also inventory lists detailing the assets of James Dudley's estate (1746) and Thomas Bean's estate (1804), as well as administration accounts for John Dudley's estate (1805), which include lists of notes due. Other probate papers in this collection include documents on the guardianship of the Wadleigh children.

John Dudley's materials consist of his public business, his work with the New Hampshire Superior Court, and his personal papers. His public business includes records related to his involvement in local governance, such as letters from Meshech Weare about appointments and military service (1764), from Col. David Gilman discussing officer appointments (1776), and letters concerning elections (1787, 1790). Also included are receipts for troop payments (1776), information on Stephen Holland and the Loyalists, and descriptions of skirmishes with Native Americans at Mount Independence.

John Dudley's Superior Court papers feature letters from Josiah Bartlett, Timothy Farrar, Daniel Newcomb, and Simeon Olcott discussing appointments and the difficulty of holding court. In his private papers, the materials include powers of attorney (1757-1779), letters about lumber from Samuel MacClintock (1787), letters from physician Levi Bartlett (1797), and a memorandum book of accounts (1777-1791). He also received several invitations from prominent figures including John Langdon, Theodore Atkinson, John Taylor Gilman, Samuel Livermore, and John Peirce.

The Massachusetts items folder includes various local governmental papers from the 1700s, such as Spencer Phipps' report on a meeting house in Scituate (1731) and an order on a sawmill dam in Hingham (1750) to allow the passage of fish. Additional deputy sheriff's reports from the keeper of the Boston jail date from 1766 to 1775.

The John Dudley Jr. papers consist of documents relating to his land dealings and activities in Maine, notably a deed for 200 acres in Washington, ME, (1779) and letters detailing his activities clearing land and operating a sawmill.

Moses Dudley's papers consist primarily of his work as justice of the peace, in addition to some military commissions (1787-1788) and judicial appointments spanning several decades (1797-1834). The bulk of his material consists of legal papers as Justice of the Peace, which include approximately 100 documents such as warrants, summonses, writs of attachment, and legal cases. Other materials include receipts, a summary of taxes paid (1815-1842), and letters from his children across the country.

This collection also includes a number of land deeds for the Dudley family from the early 18th to the early 19th century, including a deed for 100 acres of land in Freetown (1727/28) and numerous deeds of John Dudley detailing property transactions in Allenstown, Brentwood, Candia, Epping, Exeter, Gilmanton, and Raymond, NH. Some of the deeds are for land bought at auction and for mills, like the Freetown Mill (1749-1777) and the Dudley Mill (1771-1773).

A few materials from the Richardson family (1786-1829) are also in this collection and include receipts, a letter, and deeds.

A partial inventory is found in Appendix 1.

Arrangement:

The Dudley papers are arranged by individual, then by type, then chronologically.

Contents List

Box 1

Folder 1	Genealogical and biographical material, 1821-1822, undated
Folder 2	Wills and estates, 1735-1805
Folder 3	John Dudley public business, 1763-August 1776
Folder 4	John Dudley public business, September 1776-March 1780
Folder 5	John Dudley public business, April 1780-July 1790
Folder 6	John Dudley Superior Court, 1784-1789
Folder 7	John Dudley Superior Court, 1790-1796
Folder 8	John Dudley private papers, 1754-1804 and 1728
Folder 9	John Dudley dinner invitations, 1791, 1796, and undated
Folder 10	John Dudley Massachusetts items, 1731-1775
Folder 11	John Dudley Jr. letters from Washington, 1779-1792
Folder 12	Moses Dudley commissions, 1787-1834
Folder 13	Moses Dudley correspondence, 1798-1817
Folder 14	Moses Dudley correspondence, 1818-1831
Folder 15	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1799
Folder 16	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1800-1801
Folder 17	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1802-1804
Folder 18	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1805-April 1806
Folder 19	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1806-1809
Folder 20	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1810-1814
Folder 21	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1815

Folder 22	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1816-1818
Folder 23	Moses Dudley Justice of the Peace papers, 1819-1832
Folder 24	Richardson estate and papers, 1786-1829
Folder 25	Guardianship of Wadleigh Children and other papers, 1807-1817
Folder 26	Moses Dudley accounts and miscellaneous, 1799-1842
Folder 27	Moses Dudley family papers, 1815-1853

Box 2

Folder 1	Deed of Col. Stephen Dudley to Ebenezer Colcord, March 1727-1728
Folder 2	Deeds to John Dudley in Exeter, 1744-1752
Folder 3	Deeds to John Dudley, 1754-1779
Folder 4	Deeds to John Dudley in Gilmanton, 1761-1762
Folder 5	Deeds to John Dudley in Raymond, 1751-1767
Folder 6	Deeds to John Dudley in Raymond, 1762-1781
Folder 7	Deeds to John Dudley in Raymond, 1768-1778
Folder 8	Deeds to John Dudley in Raymond, 1782-1787
Folder 9	Deeds to John Dudley in Raymond, 1788-1800
Folder 10	Other deeds, 1757-1779
Folder 11	Other deeds, 1788-1817

Separated Materials:

Two family charts of John Dudley and Moses Dudley by George Melvill have been moved to the museum collections. See museum accession: 1988.512 and 2002.676

Subject Terms

People:

Atkinson, Theodore, 1697-1779
 Bartlett, Josiah, 1729-1795
 Bartlett, Levi, 1763-1828
 Dudley family
 Dudley, John, 1725-1805
 Dudley, John, Jr., 1754-1828
 Dudley, Moses, 1766-1843
 Farrar, Timothy, 1747-1849
 Gilman, John Taylor, 1753-1825
 Hill, Isaac, 1789-1851
 Holland, Stephen
 Kelly, John, 1786-1860
 Langdon, John, 1741-1819
 Livermore, Samuel, 1732-1803
 Moore, Jacob Bailey, 1797-1853
 Newcomb, Daniel, 1747-1818
 Olcott, Simeon, 1735-1815
 Peirce, John, 1746-1814
 Plumer, William, 1759-1850

Weare, Meshech, 1713-1786

Organizations:

Harvard University
New Hampshire Mutual Fire Insurance Company
New Hampshire. Committee of Safety
New Hampshire. Militia. Regiment, 17th
New Hampshire. Superior Court

Subjects:

American loyalists
Auctions
Census
Courts
Deeds
Elections
Genealogy
Guardian and ward
House furnishings
Indians of North America
Insurance
Lumbering
Massachusetts--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
Military appointments
Militia
Mills and millwork
New Hampshire--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
Politics and government
Probate law and practice
Sawmills
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783
Wills

Locations:

Boston, MA
Candia, NH
Cornish, NH
Exeter, NH
Freetown, MA
Gilmanton, NH
Grafton, NH
Hingham, MA
Hopkinton, NH
Raymond, NH
Scituate, MA
Washington, ME

Occupations:

Judges
Justice of the Peace

Appendix 1: Inventory

The following is a partial item-level inventory/description for this collection by subject.

Genealogical and Biographical material (9 documents)

- Ornamented charts of families of John Dudley and of Moses Dudley by George Melvill [transferred to museum]
- Correspondence with Jacob Bailey Moore and John Kelly concerning John Dudley
- Obituary notice

Wills and Estates (15 documents)

- Will of Stephen Dudley, 1734/5 February 17
- Return of committee appointed to set off widow's dower to Hannah, widow of Trueworthy Dudley, 1751 June 3
- Inventory of estate of James Dudley, including cooper's tools, 1746, sale of lands in Brentwood, receipts
- Moses Dudley's account of administration of estate of John Dudley and list of notes due, 1805
- Inventory of estate of Thomas Bean with administrator's account, 1804

John Dudley Public Business (28 documents)

- Letter from Meshech Weare concerning appointment as referee with John Phillips and himself, 1764
- Committee of Safety business, summary of census 1775
- Letters from Col. David Gilman on appointment of officers, 1776
- Receipt for money paid troops, 1776
- Description of skirmish with Indians at Mount Independence
- Information concerning Stephen Holland and the Loyalists
- Letters concerning elections, 1787, 1790

John Dudley Superior Court (25 documents)

- Letters from Josiah Bartlett making appointments
- Letters from Judges Timothy Farrar, Daniel Newcomb, and Simeon Olcott on difficulty of holding court

John Dudley Private Papers (22 documents)

- Includes 6 powers of attorney, 1757-1779
- Letter from Samuel MacClintock about lumber, 1787
- Two letters from Levi Bartlett, physician, 1797
- Memorandum book of accounts, 1777-1791

John Dudley Invitations (8 documents)

- Invitations to dine from John Langdon, Theodore Atkinson, John Taylor Gilman, Samuel Livermore, John Peirce

Massachusetts Items (10 documents)

- Spencer Phipps' report of meeting house in Scituate, 1731

- Jacob Cushing receipt, 1748, and order from Selectmen of Hingham to open sawmill dam for passage of fish, 1750
- Joseph Otis, deputy sheriff of Suffolk County, keeper of Boston Gaol, 6 papers, 1766-1775

John Dudley Jr. Papers (11 documents)

- Deed to 200 acres of land in Washington, Maine, 1779
- Letters to parents from Maine, clearing land, sawmill

Moses Dudley Commissions (20 documents)

- Two commissions in the 6th Company, 17th Regiment of militia, as Ensign 1787 and as Second Lieutenant 1788
- Nine commissions as justice of the peace for the County of Rockingham, 1797, 1802, 1812, 1816, 1821, 1826, 1829, 1834
- Was justice of peace and quorum 1829 and 1834

Moses Dudley Justice of Peace Papers (circa 100 documents)

- Miscellaneous papers including complaints, warrants, summons, writs of attachment, bills for collection, etc.
- Cases heard by Moses Dudley as Justice of the Peace

Richardson Family Papers (12 documents)

- Receipts, a letter, deeds
- Moses Dudley was probably executor of estate

Probate Papers (10 documents)

- Miscellaneous papers
- Guardianship of Wadleigh children
- Bagley, Edmunds

Moses Dudley Miscellaneous Accounts (23 documents)

- Receipts
- Booklet summarizing taxes paid 1815-1842
- A few accounts and bills
- Three notices of auctions

Moses Dudley Family Papers (14 documents)

- Correspondence with sons: Moses Jr. in Bath, NY; James in Maine and Illinois; Guilford in Pittsburg, PA
- Commissions of Elbridge Gerry Dudley

Col. Stephen Dudley to Ebenezer Colcord (1 document)

- Grant of 100 acres of land obtained from Capt. Peter Penewit and Abigail, his squaw, by deed of May 11, 1725, and also right in settling Freetown land by power of attorney from John Usher, Jr. of Charles in Massachusetts Bay May 11, 1720

Deeds to John Dudley (23 deeds)

- Deeds of land in Exeter, Brentwood, and Epping
- Deed from Samuel Magoon to Mary Brown, 1744
- Deed from Susanna Bradley to Davison Dudley, 1747
- Deed from John Folsom to Stephen Dudley, 1760
- Tripartite agreement between Nicholas Dudley Jr., John Light, and Noah Emery, 1752

Deeds to John Dudley – Gilmanton (14 deeds)

- Land in Gilmanton
- Three deeds of land bought from the Proprietor's tax collector at auction, 1762

Deeds to John Dudley – Mills in Raymond (6 deeds)

- Deeds to parts of sawmills
- Freetown Mill, 1749, 1759, 1774, 1777
- Dudley Mill, John Haines to Caleb Smith, 1771 to John Dudley, 1773
- Receipt for sale of mill by Caleb Smith, 1785
- Receipt for timber to Moses Dudley, 1795

Deeds to John Dudley – Raymond (45 deeds)

- Many of these for small parcels of land near together

Dudley Family Deeds (19 deeds)

- Two deeds of Samuel Dudley, brother of John Dudley, 1757-1763
- Deeds to John Dudley of land in Candia, Allenstown, and in Maine
- Deeds of land to Moses Dudley, 1788-1817

Appendix 2: Names

The following is an alphabetical list of individuals in this collection.

Adams, Nathaniel	Dudley, Elbridge Gerry
Atkinson (Theodore)	Dudley, Gilman
	Dudley, Guilford
Bachelder, Ebenezer	Dudley, James
Badger, Joseph	Dudley, John
Badger, William	Dudley, John, Jr.
Bailey, Joshua	Dudley, Mercy
Bartlett, Josiah	Dudley, Moses
Bartlett, Levi	Dudley, Moses, Jr.
Batchelder, Frances	Dudley, Nathaniel
Bayley, Abner	Dudley, Nicholas, Jr.
Bean, Benjamin	Dudley, Samuel
Bean, David	Dudley, Stephen
Bean, Elizabeth	Dudley, Trueworthy
Bean, James	Duncan, Robert
Bean, Jeremiah	Dunlap, James
Bell, Samuel	
Blake, Henry	Eastman, Edward
Blunt, Samuel	Elkins, Eleazar
Bradley, Susanna	Emery, Noah
Briggs, George N.	
Brodhead, John	Farrar, Timothy
Brown, Mary	Fifield, Edward
Brown, Nathan	Folsom, James
Buswell, John	Folsom, John
	Folsom, Josiah
Calfe, John	Folsom, Nathaniel
Chase, Moses	Forsaith, Matthew
Clifford, William	Foster, Samuel
Clifford, Zechariah	
Colby, Anthony	Gale, Mary
Colcord, Ebenezer	Gale, Stephen
Colcord, Edward	George, James
Connor, Jeremiah	Giddings, John
Cram, Samuel	Gilman, Antipas
Cram, Timothy	Gilman, Daniel
Cudworth, Benjamin	Gilman, David
Cushing, Jacob	Gilman, John
	Gilman, John Taylor
Davis, Benjamin	Gilman, Nathaniel
Dearborn, Jonathan	Gilman, Nicholas
Dudley, Benjamin	Gilman, Samuel
Dudley, Davison	Gilman, Sarah

Gilman, Theophilus
Gordon, Meriah
Gordon, Thomas
Grant, Daniel
Graves, William
Greenleaf, Simon

Hale, Elizabeth
Hale, Sarah
Hall, Joshua
Hancock, John
Hardie, Mary
Healey family
Healey, Nathaniel
Hill, Isaac
Hill, James
Hills, Benjamin
Hills, John
Hubbard, John

Kavanagh, Edward
Kelly, John
Kendall, Amos

Ladd, Edward
Ladd, Elias
Ladd, Josiah
Langdon, John
Light, John
Livermore (Samuel)
Lock, William
Loving, John
Lowell, John

MacClintock, Samuel
Magoon, Samuel
Marsh, John
McFarland, Samuel
Melvill, George
Moody, Daniel
Moore, Jacob Bailey
Moore, James
Moore, Martha
Moore, William
Morril, David Lawrence

Morrill, Ephraim
Morrison, Alexander

Neal, John
Newcomb, Daniel
Norris, Jonathan

Odlin, Dudley
Olcott, Simeon
Osgood, Oliver
Otis, Joseph

Page, John
Peirce, John
Phillips, John
Phipps, Spencer
Pickering, John
Pierce, Benjamin
Plumer, Daniel
Plumer, William
Poor, Samuel
Prescott, John
Prescott, Joseph

Quincy, Edmund

Richardson, Anna
Richardson, Samuel
Rindge family
Robie, Samuel
Robinson, Thomas
Rogers, Nathaniel

Scribner, Edward
Scrivenor, Daniel
Sleeper, Apphia
Sleeper, John
Smith, Caleb
Smith, Ebenezer
Smith, Robert
Smith, Samuel
Stevens, Edward
Sullivan, John

Thomas, Ebenezer
Todd, Daniel

Tuck, George
Tucker, Stephen

Underwood, James
Underwood, James, Jr.

Wadleigh, Joseph, Jr.
Walker, James
Weare, Meshech

Wells, John Jr.
Wendell, John
Whipple, Oliver
Wilson, John
Worthen, Ezekial

Young, Aaron
Young, David