

**Sturgis Library Archives
Genealogical and Personal Document Collection**

MS. 7
Brooks Family Papers

Volume: 1 Linear Foot

Provenance: Gift of Walter E. Babbitt

Restrictions: None stated

Processed by: A. A. Mayo, 8/1991, revised by Pamela Narbeth, 2/1998, revised by Lucy Loomis 4/2014

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

These papers currently consist of two Series: that of Obed Brooks of Harwich and of his brother Henry Cobb Brooks of Boston and Harwich. The Brooks family contributed significantly to the Harwich community and to the world of trade, business and finance.

Obed Brooks, Jr. was born August 21, 1809 the second son of Obed and Sally (Weekes). Like his father before him, the younger Brooks devoted himself to a life of community service and public office. As a young man, Obed served as a clerk and as deputy wharfinger in Boston until 1831. In 1833 his business partnership of Rand and Brooks was dissolved when he returned to Harwich. He then assumed control of the family store, under the name Obed Brooks & Co. a business he maintained until 1856. In that year Obed Brooks became cashier of the burgeoning Bank of Cape Cod, and treasurer of the likewise developing Cape Cod Five Cents Saving Bank. Mr. Brooks retired from his position with the former in 1865, and from the latter in 1880.

In 1852, Mr. Brooks was appointed a commissioner to examine Cape Cod Harbor. He was also appointed by Gov. Boutwell as commissioner of the Mashpee Indians in 1852. At this time he was elected Town Clerk and Treasurer. From 1854-1858 he was the Harwich postmaster, succeeding his father in that position. For many years, Mr. Brooks also held the office of Justice of the Peace and Notary Public as well as clerk and treasurer of the Congregational Church.

Obed Brooks married his first wife, Clementine Guidon of France, on January 22, 1836, in Boston. His only surviving child, Mary Frances, was born Sept. 13, 1837. Clementine died on June 14, 1847. Mr. Brooks then married Susan Dodge, daughter of Dr. Franklin Dodge of Harwich. Mr. Brooks died November 18, 1882.

The youngest son of Obed and Sally Brooks was Henry Cobb Brooks, born on May 16, 1824. This younger brother of Obed, Jr. made a name for himself as a respected and successful merchant in Boston. He headed the commission agency of HC Brooks & Co. at 24 Commercial Wharf. Mr. Brooks was an honorary member of the Boston Marine Society, admitted Jan. 1, 1867. Henry Brooks was a ranked military officer, achieving the rank of Colonel. Mr. Brooks died May 28, 1886 in Boston.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Brooks Family Papers originated as part of an initial collection of material donated to Sturgis Library by the late Walter Babbitt of Brewster. The Papers are an open collection and are currently divided into 2 Series: Obed Brooks (1809-1882) and Henry Cobb Brooks (1824-1886).

The Obed Brooks Series documents such matters as personal and public finance, the tense settlement of the estate of Obed Brooks, Sr., the legal interest of a Captain Thomas S. Chase in the estate of Aseneth Snow, estate appointments, a proposed Normal School for Harwich, Brooks family store accounts, founding of the Bank of Cape Cod, and accounts maintained by H.C. Brooks & Co. of Boston with the Bank. There are also Town Treasurer records, including payments authorized by selectmen and the Alewife Report, petition records as Justice of the Peace of Barnstable County, and the building and remodeling of home and Bank property. It should be noted that some of this material may, in fact, have been that of Obed Brooks Sr. (1781-1856).

The Henry Cobb Brooks Series consists of a personal memoir, transactions for merchandise, supplies and dry and perishable cargoes. There are documents for medical attention, lodging in Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore; church fees, tolls, mens furnishings, livery costs, labor costs, Temple Club dues, carriage, artillery, liquor purchases and newspaper subscriptions. There is also correspondence with shipping agents, officials, owners and captains on voyages to many domestic ports as well as Australia, England and Nova Scotia.

SERIES LIST AND DESCRIPTION

SERIES 1: Obed Brooks (1809-1882)

SERIES 2: Henry Cobb Brooks (1824-1886)

CONTAINER LIST

Box: Folder:

Contents:

SERIES 1, Obed Brooks (1809-1882)

1	1	General
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1	3-4	Bank of Cape Cod; Contracts, 1856-1866 Correspondence, 1856-58;1870-75
1	5	Correspondence, 1832-1876
1	6-7	Estate Papers: Brooks family, 1831-1856 Captain Thomas S. Chase interest, 1840-1844
1	8	Justices of the Peace, Barnstable County notices and warrants, 1831-1832
1	9	Treasurer, Town of Harwich: Alewife Report, 1835
1	10	Treasurer, Town of Harwich: Vouchers, issued by selectmen, 1814-1828, 1837
1	11	Letter Book, Obed Brooks, 1855-1872
1	12	Seizure Notice, William P. Moore, Harwich, Obed Brooks, JP, Dec 25, 1932 (2 copies)

SERIES 2, Henry Cobb Brooks (1824-1862)

2	1	General
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2	3	Accounts and Receipts, Merchant, 1858-1862
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2	5	Correspondence, Aug 1858
2	6	Correspondence, Sept 1 - 21 1858
2	7	Correspondence, Sept 21 - Oct 1858