



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the George W. Ludington Collection

NMAH.AC.0135

Don Darroch

1985

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	George W. Ludington Collection
Date:	1817-1889
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0135
Creator:	Turrell, Orlando B. Warshaw, Isadore, 1900-1969 Caldwell, Edwin Camby, Henry B. Ludington, George W. (bank cashier) (Creator) Ludington, Harrison Ludington, B. L. Ludington, Charles H. Ludington, Sam Ludington, Sims Ludington, James Ludington, Nelson
Extent:	0.66 Cubic feet (2 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Letters and memoranda written by Ludington family members to George Ludington, cashier of the Bank of Kent, Ludingtonville, New York.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was purchased from Augusta Warshaw, widow of Isadore Warshaw, in 1971.

Provenance

This collection was once a part of the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana (AC0060). It was removed and separated into an independent collection in 1985.

Related Materials

Materials at Other Organizations

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin's holdings include the papers of Harrison Ludington, one of the Ludington brother's and a correspondent in this collection.

Processing Information

Processed by Don Darroch, volunteer, supervised by Robert Harding, archivist, 1985.

Preferred Citation

George W. Ludington Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

George Ludington was a banker who lived in Ludingtonville, Putnam County, New York. Four of his brothers were in the lumber manufacture and merchandising and other businesses in the Midwest. Another brother was in the import/export trade in New York City.

James Ludington was a lumber dealer of Milwaukee and occasionally Bloomington, (Indiana?). Most of his letters deal with financial relations with George Ludington and his bank. The amounts mentioned were large for those times, and James seemed to be equal in status to George, frequently offering advice on business matters. He was clearly in debt to George over the period covered by the correspondence, 1856-1864.

Nelson Ludington was a lumber manufacturer and dealer in Chicago, also in a debtor relationship to George Ludington. His letters expressed strong criticism of the conduct of Civil War operations.

Charles H. Ludington was a senior partner in Lathrop, Ludington and Company, an import/export firm in New York City.

Harrison Ludington was a senior partner of H. Ludington & Co., lumber merchants of Milwaukee and later mayor of that city (1872-1876) and governor of Wisconsin (1876-1878).

Sims Ludington, apparently the youngest brother of George, was a lumber merchant in Winona, Minnesota. He served in the Union Army and was seriously wounded in 1863.

Sam Ludington, based on a single letter in 1856, was apparently poorly educated with uncertain employment.

Other family members represented in the correspondence were B.L. Ludington (relationship uncertain), employed in the U.S. Appraisers Office, New York City, and a cousin, Henry B. Camby, New York City. One brief note indicates he may have been in the apparel business.

Non-family correspondents include the following:

Orlando B. Turrell, an employee of Caldwell and Co., a bank in St. Paul, Minnesota and later the cashier of the Marine Bank of that city. His letters, often lengthy and spanning 1857-1864, are mostly concerned with financial transactions and general business conditions in Minnesota but are written in a friendly style with many personal references.

Edwin Caldwell, a senior partner of the Savings Bank of Caldwell, Whitney and Co., St. Paul, Minnesota. His letters, written between 1857 and 1859, are primarily business-related, and are concerned with loan transactions for George Ludington's bank. However, there are numerous personal comments, reflecting a somewhat adversarial relationship with Ludington.

Scope and Contents

The Collection consists almost entirely of letters and business memoranda received by George Ludington. The major correspondents are his six brothers. Additional correspondents include other family members, friends and business associates. The documents are in varying states of physical preservation. A few fragments lack the originator's name or date.

The bulk of the correspondence is dated in the years just prior to and during the Civil War. The primary subject matter is business dealings, mainly financial transactions involving extension of loans by George Ludington, their servicing and repayment. Some correspondence relates to merchandise purchases and to dealings in commodities, primarily grain but also including cotton and lumber. There are numerous references to local "currencies" (the notes of banks, often of uncertain security) and to the credit-worthiness of individuals.

The letters often refer to matters of personal and family interest and include revealing comments on military aspects of the Civil War (particularly the draft and the then legal practice of paying substitutes for military duty.) One Ludington brother served in the Union Army and was seriously wounded. There are references to difficulties with Indian tribes in Illinois and Minnesota. A description of a disastrous railroad accident is included.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into three series.

- Series 1: Family correspondence, 1848-1889
- Series 2: Other correspondence, 1817-1889
- Series 3: Certificates of Deposit, 1862-1863

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Banks and banking, American -- 19th century
- Cashiers -- 19th century
- Commercial products -- 19th century
- Commodities -- 19th century
- Draft -- 19th century
- Draft resisters -- 19th century
- Exports -- 19th century
- Hiring of war substitutes, Civil War
- Imports -- 19th century
- Indian relations
- Indians of North America -- 19th century
- International trade -- 19th century
- Local finance -- 19th century
- Lumber trade -- 19th century
- Money -- 19th century
- Substitute soldiers, Civil War
- finance -- 19th century

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence -- 19th century

Names:

- Bank of Kent
- Caldwell and Company
- H. Ludington & Company
- Lathrop, Ludington & Company

Savings Bank of Caldwell, Whitney, and Company
U.S. Appraisers Office

Occupations:

Bankers

Places:

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Container Listing

Series 1: Family Correspondence, 1817-1889

Box 1, Folder 1	George Ludington to James Ludington, 1856-1857
Box 1, Folder 2	George Ludington from James Ludington, 1858-1864
Box 1, Folder 3	George Ludington from Nelson Ludington, 1856-1861
Box 1, Folder 4	George Ludington from Nelson Ludington, 1862-1864
Box 1, Folder 5	George Ludington from C.H. Ludington, 1856-1863
Box 1, Folder 6	George Ludington from Harrison Ludington, 1857-1859
Box 1, Folder 7	George Ludington from Loomis Ludington, 1856-1860
Box 1, Folder 8	George Ludington from Sims Ludington, Sam Ludington, B.L. Ludington and Henry Camby, 1817-1889

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Series 2: Other correspondence, 1817-1889

Box 2, Folder 1	George Ludington from various individuals; also, his letters to other individuals and fragments of correspondence, 1817-1857
Box 2, Folder 2	George Ludington from various individuals; also, his letters to other individuals and fragments of correspondence, 1858-1889
Box 2, Folder 3	George Ludington from Orlando B. Turrell, 1857-1860
Box 2, Folder 4	George Ludington from Orlando B. Turrell, 1861-1864
Box 2, Folder 5	George Ludington from Caldwell and Company; and Caldwell, Whitney and Company (Edwin Caldwell), 1857 January-June
Box 2, Folder 6	George Ludington from Caldwell and Company; and Caldwell, Whitney and Company (Edwin Caldwell), 1857 July-1859
Box 2, Folder 7	George Ludington from Union Army soldiers, 1862-1864

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Series 3: Certificates of Deposit

Box 2, Folder 8

Bank of Kent, Putnam County, New York

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