



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Samuel Adams Papers

NMAH.AC.1310

Chelsea Bucklin

2015

Archives Center, National Museum of American History
P.O. Box 37012
Suite 1100, MRC 601
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
Business Number: Phone: 202-633-3270
Fax Number: Fax: 202-786-2453
archivescenter@si.edu
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Samuel Adams Papers
Date:	1862-1933 (bulk 1862-1865)
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1310
Source:	Hollingsworth, Robert K. (Donor)
Creator:	Adams, Sam (Author)
Extent:	0.15 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Samuel Adams Papers document a surgeon's perspective on several major battles and events occurring during the United States Civil War.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Robert K. Hollingsworth on September 26, 2013.

Available Formats

Series 1: Supplemental Documentation, contains a compact disc with transcriptions for all of the handwritten letters, medical papers, notes, and genealogical information.

Processing Information

Processed by Chelsea M. Bucklin, intern, 2015; supervised by Alison Oswald, archivist.

Preferred Citation

Samuel Adams Papers, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Samuel Adams was born in Maine around 1839, and was a surgeon for the Union Army during the United States Civil War. Adams enlisted on April 16, 1862 as an assistant surgeon, and was commissioned into the U.S. Army Medical Staff as part of the regular Army. Adams received two promotions by brevet during the war to Captain and then to Major. He was present during the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg, and died of yellow fever on September 9, 1867 in Galveston, Texas.

Scope and Contents

This collection is divided into four series and includes letters and other papers of the Civil War surgeon Samuel Adams, as well as two CDs containing scans of the letters and transcriptions, and other documentation. The letters were sent to Adams's family and were written from the sites of major battles of the Civil War, including Antietam, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. One letter mentions Lincoln's assassination. The collection contains medical papers written by Adams, a military pass, and a list of "maxims" written by Adams's body servant, William. Additionally, genealogical information connecting the collection donor to Samuel Adams, transcriptions of all handwritten documentation, and a copy of *Grandfather to Grandson*, which is a collection of letters written by the donor's great-grandfather during the Great Depression, are included.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into four series.

Series 1: Supplemental Documentation, 1862-1933, undated

Series 2: Civil War Letters, 1862-1865 (bulk 1862-1863)

Series 3: Medical Papers, undated

Series 4: Miscellaneous Documents, 1861 July 16, undated

Bibliography

Heitman, Francis Bernard. *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903.

The Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1853.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Antietam, Battle of, Md., 1862
- Assassinations
- Civil war -- United States
- Fredericksburg, Battle of, Fredericksburg, Va., 1862
- Gettysburg, Battle of, Gettysburg, Pa., 1863

Medical sciences

Types of Materials:

Compact discs
Letters (correspondence) -- 1860-1870
Medical notes

Names:

Hollingsworth, Robert K.
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865

Occupations:

Surgeons -- United States

Places:

Antietam (Md.)
Fredericksburg (Va.)
Gettysburg (Pa.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Supplemental Documentation, 1862-1933, undated

Scope and Contents: This series contains supplemental documentation provided by the donor, Robert K. Hollingsworth. The transcriptions are for all of the handwritten letters, medical papers, notes, genealogical information connecting the donor to Samuel Adams, and a copy of nine letters written by the donor's great-grandfather during the Great Depression. The documentation was created in 2012 and stored on compact discs. Access copies were printed in 2015.

Box 1, Folder 1 Grandfather to Grandson, 1932-1933
1 Disc

Box 1, Folder 2 Genealogical Information, undated
1 Disc

Box 1, Folder 3 Transcriptions (Access Copies), 1862-1865

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Series 2: Civil War Letters, 1862-1865 (bulk 1862-1863)

Language: English.

Scope and Contents: This series contains 12 handwritten letters from Samuel Adams to his family members. Letters are dated between September of 1862 and March of 1865, and contain descriptions or information relating to Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln's assassination, and the battles of Gettysburg, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and others.

Box 1, Folder 4 [Letter, 1862 September 28](#)

Box 1, Folder 5 [Letter, 1862 September 29](#)

Box 1, Folder 6 [Letter, 1862 October 13](#)

Box 1, Folder 7 [Letter, 1862 November 21](#)

Box 1, Folder 8 [Letter, 1862 December 11](#)

Box 1, Folder 9 [Letter, 1862 December 21](#)

Box 1, Folder 10 [Letter, 1863 January 21](#)

Box 1, Folder 11 [Letter, 1863 April 10](#)

Box 1, Folder 12 [Letter, 1863 July 5](#)

Box 1, Folder 13 [Letter, 1863 September 7](#)

Box 1, Folder 14 [Letter, 1864 November 29](#)

Box 1, Folder 15 [Letter, 1865 April 15 \[letter was mistakenly dated March 15 by author\]](#)
Notes: Letter misdated March 15, 1865. Should read April 15, 1865. First line of letter reads "We are all utterly horrified and shocked at the murder of our noble President [Abraham Lincoln]."

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Series 3: Medical Papers, undated

Scope and Contents: This series contains two handwritten papers by Samuel Adams and a set of handwritten medical notes. It is unclear if the notes were written by Samuel Adams or another party. The two papers, which may or may not have been presented formally, are on the topics of acute alcoholism and the uses of chloroform, and typho-malarial fever.

Box 1, Folder 16	Treatise on Acute Alcoholism and the Uses of Chloroform, undated
Box 1, Folder 17	Paper, Typho-Malarial Fever, undated
Box 1, Folder 18	Miscellaneous Notes, medical, undated

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Series 4: Miscellaneous Documents, 1861 July 16, undated

Scope and Contents: This series contains an official military pass dated July 16, 1861, a list of maxims written by Adams's body servant, William, and 11 envelopes. The pass is signed by both Charles Adams (Samuel's father) and aide-de-camp Drake De Kay. The envelopes are primarily addressed to Charles Adams, and many include their original stamp.

Box 1, Folder 19	List of Maxims, undated
Box 1, Folder 20	Military Pass, 1861 July 16
Box 1, Folder 21	Envelopes, undated

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