

Isaac W. Merrill Diaries Collection, 1828-1878, 1979-1996

Collection Summary

Reference Code:	MRQ, US.
Repository:	Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Call Number:	MSS 84
Creator:	Merrill, Isaac Watts, 1803-1879
Title:	Isaac W. Merrill Diaries Collection
Dates:	1828-1878, 1979-1996
Size:	3 linear feet (7 boxes)
Language(s):	Collection materials are in English.
Abstract:	This collection consists of the 51 original diaries of Haverhill, Massachusetts, shoemaker and farmer, Isaac W. Merrill, plus transcriptions, genealogy, indices, and other material pertaining to the diaries.

Biographical Sketch

Isaac Merrill was born on 1 August 1803 in Haverhill, Massachusetts, to Moses Merrill (1776-1864) and his first wife, Mary D. Greenleaf (died 1805). Isaac attended Atkinson Academy. He was a shoemaker and small farmer, but, according to his diaries, also made medicines and hair dyes, cut hair, wrote wills and deeds, made parish assessments, collected roots and herbs, wrote warrants for parish meetings, moderated parish meetings, worked on the highways, made carts and kites for children, and prescribed remedies for his neighbors. His household income was augmented by a variety of boarders.

Isaac met Lois Melinda Chase (1808-1873) at Atkinson Academy and they married on 17 October 1831. They had no children of their own, but they frequently had children visiting or boarding with them. During the last ten years of Lois' life, they had seven young children (ages 16 months to 12 years) boarding with them. Isaac died on 25 March 1879 at the age of 75.

The Isaac Merrill House

Isaac had a house built starting in August 1830, which was completed in 1831. Isaac and his wife lived there until they died. In his will, Isaac left the house to his brother, Gyles', family. From 1880 to 1944, it was lived in by his nephew and grand-nephew, James C. Merrill, Sr. and

James C. Merrill, Jr. Then it was occupied by Russell E. Smith, a veterinarian, for a few years. He was succeeded at that location by another veterinarian, Dr. Boynton Grover, whose family lived in the house from 1950 to 1986. Dr. Grover sold the land to E. Haffner Fournier in 1986. The effort to save the house began in 1987 when Fournier and his wife wanted to demolish it to build a car wash and service station in its place. A local committee raised money and the house was moved from Plaistow Road to a temporary location at Stateline Plaza, near the New Hampshire state line. More money was raised and in October 1993, the house was moved to Route 110 near Kenoza Lake to serve as a visitor/tourist information center. It later burned to the ground in the late 1990s.

Arrangement

- Series 1. Original Diaries, 1828-1878
- Series 2. Transcriptions, 1979-1988, undated [1993?]
 - Subseries 2.1. Abridged Version (typed), 1979
 - Subseries 2.2. Abridged Version (word processor), 1988
 - Subseries 2.3. Final Version (word processor), undated [1993?]
- Series 3. Genealogy, Indices and Other Material, 1986-1996, undated

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of the 51 original diaries of Haverhill, Massachusetts, shoemaker and farmer, Isaac W. Merrill, plus transcriptions, genealogy, indices, and other material pertaining to the diaries. Series one contains 51 volumes of the original diaries. Series two consists of three different versions of the transcriptions of the diaries. Series three contains a chronology of Isaac Merrill's life, genealogical materials, indices of marriages and deaths in the journals, and references to topics and persons in the journals.

Administrative Information

- Preferred Citation:** [Item Identification], Isaac W. Merrill Diaries Collection, MSS 84, Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
- Custodial History:** The diaries were left to Gyles Merrill, Isaac Merrill's half-brother, in Isaac's will. In 1955, they were given to the Haverhill Public Library by James Merrill.
- Acquisition Information:** The diaries were a gift of James Merrill (#262744) in 1955. The transcriptions and auxiliary material were donated by Julian S. Miller in the 1990s.
- Processing Information:** Processed by Tamara Gaydos, 2021.
- Access Rights:** Collection is open for research.

Phys. Access Restrictions:	None.
Tech. Access Restrictions:	None.
Copyright:	Copyright has not been assigned to the Haverhill Public Library. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Haverhill Public Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the researcher.
Related Collections:	Materials about the Isaac Merrill house and efforts to save it are located under call number <i>HH7 I73</i> .
Separated Material:	Printed material was separated from the collection and cataloged separately. There are two boxes of unprocessed materials containing research on Isaac Merrill and his family in the library.
Conservation Notes:	Diaries were rehoused in acid-free folders. Transcriptions were removed from plastic binders.
Subjects:	Diaries Genealogy Haverhill (Mass.) Merrill, Isaac Watts, 1803-1879 Merrill, Lois Melinda Chase, 1808-1873 Miller, Julian S., 1912-1995 Shoemakers--Massachusetts--History--19th century Shoemaking--Massachusetts--Haverhill

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Original Diaries, 1828-1878

This series contains 51 volumes of diaries. Starting on January 1, 1829, Merrill wrote daily entries for 41 years until January 11, 1871. The twelve months that follow that date are blank, after which, from January 1872 to December 30, 1878, he made irregular entries in the margins of the *Old Farmer's Almanack*.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
<i>New England Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1828-1829 [2 volumes]	1	1
<i>New England Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1830-1831 [2 volumes]	1	2
<i>Improved Farmer's and Scholar's Almanack</i> , 1832; <i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1833 [2 volumes]	1	3
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1834-1835 [2 volumes]	1	4
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1836-1837 [2 volumes]	1	5

<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1838-1839 [2 volumes]	1	6
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1840-1841 [2 volumes]	1	7
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1842-1843 [2 volumes]	1	8
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1844-1845 [2 volumes]	1	9
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1846-1847 [2 volumes]	1	10
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1848-1849 [2 volumes]	1	11
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1850-1851 [2 volumes]	1	12
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1852-1853 [2 volumes]	1	13
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1854-1855 [2 volumes]	1	14
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1856-1857 [2 volumes]	2	1
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1858-1859 [2 volumes]	2	2
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1860-1861 [2 volumes]	2	3
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1862-1863 [2 volumes]	2	4
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1864-1865 [2 volumes]	2	5
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1866-1867 [2 volumes]	2	6
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1868-1869 [2 volumes]	2	7
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1870-1871 [2 volumes]	2	8
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1872-1873 [2 volumes]	2	9
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1874-1875 [2 volumes]	2	10
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1876-1877 [2 volumes]	2	11
<i>The Old Farmer's Almanack</i> , 1878	2	12

Series 2: Transcriptions, 1979, 1988, undated [1993?]

This series consists of three subseries: 2.1, Abridged Version (typed); and 2.2, Abridged Version (word processor); and 2.3, Final Version (word processor).

Subseries 2.1: Abridged Version (typed), 1979

This subseries contains an abridged version of the transcription created in 1979 by Julian S. Miller. This was a version typed on a typewriter.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Abridged version (typed) of 1828 to 1834 (pages 1-215)	2	13
Abridged version (typed) of 1835 to 1840 (pages 216-391)	3	1
Abridged version (typed) of 1841 to 1846 (pages 392-571)	3	2
Abridged version (typed) of 1847 to 1852 (pages 572-791)	3	3
Abridged version (typed) of 1853 to 1858 (pages 792-1016)	3	4
Abridged version (typed) of 1859 to 1864 (pages 1017-1242)	3	5
Abridged version (typed) of 1865 to 1878 (pages 1243-1500)	4	1

Subseries 2.2: Abridged Version (word processor), 1988

This subseries contains an abridged version of the transcription created in 1988 by Julian S. Miller. It was entered into a computer at the Haverhill Public Library and printed out.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Abridged version from 1828 to 1835	4	2
Abridged version from 1836 to 1846	4	3
Abridged version from 1846 to 1850	4	4
Abridged version from 1851 to 1856	4	5
Abridged version from 1857 to 1860	5	1
Abridged version from 1861 to 1866	5	2

Subseries 2.3: Final Version (word processor), undated [1993]

This subseries contains a printout of a full version of the diaries where the text and endnotes were corrected on paper. The corrections were made on computer discs, but the final corrected version was not printed out. The location of the computer discs is unknown.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Final version with endnotes of 1834-1838	5	3
Final version with endnotes of 1839-1843	5	4
Final version with endnotes of 1844-1849	5	5
Final version with endnotes of 1850-1854	6	1
Final version with endnotes of 1855-1858	6	2
Final version with endnotes of 1859-1862	6	3
Final version with endnotes of 1863-1866	6	4
Final version with endnotes of 1867-1869	6	5
Final version with endnotes of 1870-1878	7	1

Series 3: Genealogy, Indices and Other Material, 1986-1996, undated

This series contains a chronology of Isaac Merrill's life, genealogical materials, indices of marriages and deaths in the journals, and references to topics and persons in the journals.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Chronology of Isaac Merrill's life, 1986, 1988	7	2
Genealogy of Merrill family, 1996, undated	7	3
Biographical data compiled by J. S. Miller, 1986-1988	7	4
"Index of marriages in Isaac W. Journal," undated	7	5
"Index of deaths in Isaac W. Journal," undated	7	6
"Excerpts from Isaac W. Merrill journal by topic" [references to topics], undated	7	7
"Biographical excerpts from Isaac W. Merrill journal" [references to persons], undated	7	8