

Samuel W. Duncan Family Papers, 1853-1935, 1945

Collection Summary

Reference Code:	MRQ, US.
Repository:	Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Call Number:	MSS 77
Creator:	Duncan family
Title:	Samuel W. Duncan Family Papers
Dates:	1853-1935, 1945
Size:	1.75 linear feet (4 boxes, 1 flat file)
Language(s):	Collection materials are in English.
Abstract:	Samuel W. Duncan was a Baptist minister from Haverhill, Massachusetts, during the mid- to late 1800s. The materials in the collection document Duncan's life and that of his family members through letters. It includes a list of militia in Bradford, Massachusetts, in 1864.

Biographical Sketches

James Henry Duncan was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on 5 December 1793, to James Duncan (1726-1818) and Rebecca White. Duncan attended Phillips Exeter Academy, and graduated from Harvard University in 1812. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1815, commencing practice in Haverhill.

He grew wealthy as a partner in the shipping and mercantile business begun by his father, James Duncan Sr. (1726–1818). He was an active militia officer, and attained the rank of colonel. He was president of the Essex Agricultural Society, and member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1827, 1837, 1838, and again in 1857. He served in the Massachusetts State Senate from 1828 to 1831, and was a delegate to the Whig National Convention at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1839. He was appointed Commissioner-in-Bankruptcy in 1841.

He married Mary Willis (1805-1888) on 28 June 1826. Of the thirteen children born to them, three died in infancy and three died in early adulthood, leaving two sons and five daughters. Some of the children are: James Henry (born 1827); Rebecca Willis (born 1831); Mary Willis (1834-1910); Susan R. (born 1837); Samuel White (1838-1890); Rosanna (born 1841); Elizabeth Kingsman (1842-1886); George W. (born 1845); Caroline (1846-1917); and Margaret (born 1848).

Duncan was elected as a Whig to the Thirty-first and Thirty-second Congresses (4 March 1849 – 3 March 1853). Following his political career, he was engaged in the real-estate business. He died in Haverhill on 8 February 1869, aged 75, and was interred in Linwood Cemetery.

Albert Gorton Greene was born in Providence, Rhode Island, on 10 February 1802, to John Holden Greene (1777-1850) and Elizabeth Beverly (1780-1856). He graduated from Brown University in 1820, practiced law in Providence, and was chosen judge of the municipal court in 1858. In 1824, he married Mary Ann Clifford (1796-1865) and they had four children together. He was associated with the founding of the Providence Athenaeum and president of the Rhode Island Historical Society from 1854 until 1868. He was the author of several well-known poems, including "Old Grimes," "The Militia Muster," and "Canonchet." He moved in with his daughter, Sarah, after his health deteriorated. He died in Cleveland, Ohio, on 4 January 1868.

Samuel White Duncan was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on 19 December 1838 to James Henry Duncan (1793-1869) and Mary Willis (1805-1888). He was baptized at the age of 12 in the First Baptist Church of Haverhill and studied at Kimball Union and Colby Academies in New Hampshire. In 1856, he entered Brown University and graduated with honor in 1860. He spent one year traveling and in 1861, enrolled in Newton Theological Seminary. He served as a captain in the 50th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry from 19 September 1862 to 24 August 1863. After mustering out of the army, he entered Rochester Theological Seminary and graduated in 1866. He was ordained pastor of the Erie Street (later Euclid Avenue) Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, in April 1867. In 1875, he became pastor of the Ninth Street Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and in 1883, he moved to Rochester, New York, where he became pastor of the Second Baptist Church.

He married Sarah Margaret Fuller Greene (1839-1926) in 1867 and they had six children together: Albert Greene (1868-1907); James Henry (1871-1876); Samuel White (1873-1874); Robert Harris (1875-1892); Harold (1876-1878); and Marion Clifford (1879-1951).

Retiring from his work in Rochester in 1888, he spent several years in Haverhill. In 1892, he was chosen Foreign Secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union. He died in Brookline, Massachusetts, on 30 October 1898, and is buried in Haverhill.

Mary Willis Duncan was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on 12 February 1834, to James Henry Duncan (1793-1869) and Mary Willis (1805-1888). She was educated in the public schools in Haverhill and later at a private school. In 1857, she married Robert Harris of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and they soon moved to New York City for his business.

After Robert's death in 1894, she continued to live in New York until her death. She was a wealthy woman and contributed to many worthy causes including the First Baptist Church in Haverhill and the Children's Aid Society. She inherited the house known as "Buttonwoods" and it was she who transferred the property to the Haverhill Historical Society in 1904. She died on 13 October 1910, and was buried with her husband in Proprietors Burying Ground, Portsmouth.

Marion Clifford Duncan was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on 16 April 1879 to Samuel W. Duncan and Sarah M. F. Greene. She married Rev. John Moore McGann (1870-1958) in 1901. They had five children: Duncan McGann (1903-1904); Marion Duncan (born 1906); John Moore (1910-

1992); Elise (1919-1998); and Rita (1924-1993). She died on 4 August 1951 in New London, New Hampshire, and is buried in Linwood Cemetery in Haverhill.

Arrangement

Series 1. First Generation, 1853, 1861-1868, undated

Subseries 1.1 James H. Duncan and Mary W. Duncan, 1853, 1861-1868, undated

Subseries 1.2 Albert G. Greene, 1861-1867

Series 2. Second Generation, 1860-1907, 1919, undated

Subseries 2.1. Samuel White Duncan, 1860-1864, 1883-1884, undated

Subseries 2.2. Sarah M. F. Greene Duncan, 1861-1901, 1919, undated

Subseries 2.3. Mary Willis Duncan, 1848-1851, 1894-1907, undated

Series 3. Third Generation, 1913-1935, undated

Series 4. Fourth Generation, 1925, 1945

Scope and Content Note

This collection documents the life of Samuel W. Duncan, a minister from Haverhill, Massachusetts, and his family members. It has been arranged into four series. Series one contains letters to James H. Duncan and his wife, Mary W. Duncan, and letters to and from Albert G. Greene. Series two contains letters to Samuel W. Duncan, one letter from him, and letters to Sarah M. F. Greene Duncan, both before her marriage and after, letters to Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Duncan from their son, Albert G., and school notebooks from Mary Willis Duncan's (Samuel's sister) time at Newton Young Ladies Institute and two travel journals with ephemera pasted in from trips to Europe. Series three contains: letters to Marion C. McGann, mainly from her husband, John Moore McGann; a letter to John Moore McGann; a letter to Robert G. McGann; genealogy; a paper written by Marion D. McGann about her family history; and two tributes to Rev. John Moore McGann. Series four contains two letters from Marion Duncan McGann to her brother and her father.

Administrative Information

- Preferred Citation:** [Item Identification], Samuel W. Duncan Family Papers, MSS 77, Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
- Custodial History:** Material was acquired from creator.
- Acquisition Information:** Unknown. It is presumed that Marion Duncan McGann donated the letters to either the Haverhill Historical Society or to the Haverhill Public Library. The "The Past Recaptured," paper was donated to the Haverhill Public Library by Marion D. McGann. The

	notebooks and journals of Mary Willis Duncan were donated to the library by Mary Duncan Harris.
Processing Information:	Processed by Tamara Gaydos, 2021.
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Phys. Access Restrictions:	None.
Tech. Access Restrictions:	None.
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Related Collections:	James H. Duncan Papers (MH 8) in the Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Museum.
Separated Material:	None.
Conservation Notes:	Paper clips were removed.
Subjects:	Clergy Duncan, Albert Greene, 1868-1907 Duncan, James Henry, 1793-1869 Duncan, Mary Willis, 1805-1888 Duncan, Mary Willis, 1834-1910 Duncan, Samuel White, 1838-1898 Duncan, Sarah M. F. Greene, 1839- Genealogy Greene, Albert G. (Albert Gorton), 1802-1868 History--Massachusetts--Haverhill Letters McGann, John Moore, 1870-1958 McGann, John Moore, 1910-1992 McGann, Marion Duncan, 1879-1951 McGann, Marion Duncan, 1906- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865 Van Zandt, Arazelia Greene, 1828-1899

Collection Inventory

Series 1: First Generation, 1853, 1861-1868, undated

This series consists of two subseries: 1.1, James H. Duncan and Mary W. Duncan; and 1.2, Albert G. Greene.

Subseries 1.1: James H. Duncan and Mary W. Duncan, 1853, 1861-1868, undated

This subseries contains letters to James H. Duncan and Mary W. Duncan, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Letters to James H. Duncan from his son, Samuel, 1853, 1861-1868, undated	1	1
Letter to James H. Duncan from Sarah M. F. Greene, 1864	1	2
Letter to Mary W. Duncan from her son, Samuel, undated	1	3
Partial letter from Mary Duncan, undated	1	4

Subseries 1.2: Albert G. Greene, 1861-1867

This subseries contains letters to and from Albert G. Greene, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Correspondence with Samuel W. Duncan, 1861	1	5
Letters regarding publishing a poem, 1865-1867	1	6
Correspondence with daughter, Ara Van Zandt, 1867	1	7

Series 2: Second Generation, 1860-1901, 1919, undated

This series consists of two subseries: 2.1, Samuel White Duncan; and 2.2, Sarah M. F. Greene Duncan.

Subseries 2.1: Samuel White Duncan, 1860-1864, 1883-1884, undated

This subseries contains letters to Samuel W. Duncan and one letter from him, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Letter to Mr. Duncan from Mary. S. F. Dunn, 1860	1	8

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
List of militia in Bradford, 1864	Flat file	
Letter from Samuel W. Duncan to his children, 1883	1	9
Letters to Samuel W. Duncan, 1884, undated	1	10
Letter to Samuel W. Duncan, undated	1	11

Subseries 2.2: Sarah M. F. Greene Duncan, 1861-1901, 1919, undated

This subseries contains letters to Sarah M. F. Greene Duncan, both before her marriage and after, and letters to Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Duncan from their son, Albert G., while at Phillips Andover Academy, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Letters to Sarah M. F. Greene from Samuel W. Duncan, 1861-1866, undated	1	12
Letters to Sarah Duncan from Samuel W. Duncan, while on a European trip, 1872-1875	1	13
Letters to Sarah Duncan from Samuel W. Duncan, 1880-1884, 1892	1	14
Letter to Sarah Duncan regarding her son, Albert, 1883	1	15
Letters from Albert G. Duncan to his parents, 1883-1884	1	16
Letter to Sarah Duncan from her son, Samuel, 1888	2	1
Letter to Sarah Duncan, 1901	2	2
Letter to Sarah Duncan from her daughter, Marion, 1919	2	3
Letter to Sarah Duncan from her granddaughter, Marion, 1919	2	4
Letter to Sarah Duncan from "Lizzie," undated	2	5

Subseries 2.3: Mary Willis Duncan, 1848-1851, 1894-1907, undated

This subseries contains school notebooks from Mary's time at Newton Young Ladies Institute and two travel journals with ephemera pasted in from trips to Europe.

School notebooks, 1848-1850	4	1
School notebooks, 1849-1851	4	2
School notebooks (History and Trigonometry), undated	4	3
School notebooks (Chemistry), undated	4	4
European travel journals, 1894-1896, 1901, 1904, 1907	4	5

Series 3: Third Generation, 1913-1935, undated

This series contains: letters to Marion D. McGann, mainly from her husband, John Moore McGann; a letter to John Moore McGann; a letter to Robert G. McGann; genealogy; a paper written by Marion D. McGann about her family history; and two tributes to Rev. John Moore McGann, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1913-1914	2	6
Letters to Marion D. McGann, January – June, 1915	2	7
Letters to Marion D. McGann, June – September, 1915	2	8
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1916	2	9
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1917	2	10
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1918	3	1
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1919	3	2
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1920	3	3
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1921-1922	3	4
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1923	3	5
Letters to Marion D. McGann, 1924-1925, 1928	3	6
Letters to Marion D. McGann, undated	3	7
Letter to John Moore McGann from his mother, Mary, 1913	3	8
Letter to Robert G. McGann from John Moore McGann regarding their mother's estate, 1915	3	9
"The Past Recaptured," paper written by Marion D. McGann and read before the Saturday Morning Club, 1935	3	10
Letter about Rev. John Moore McGann, undated	3	11
"To read to the children" eulogy by Charles E. Hutchinson, Grace Church, undated	3	12
Genealogy of McGann, McNeille, and Thompson families, undated	3	13

Series 4: Fourth Generation, 1925, 1945

This series contains two letters from Marion Duncan McGann to her brother and her father, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Letter from Marion D. McGann to her brother, John Moore McGann, Jr., 1925	3	14
Letter from Marion D. McGann to her father, John Moore McGann, 1945	3	15