

NEW HAVEN COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LIBRARY

Manuscripts

No. 147

Date processed: 1984

- I. Title Hewit, Nathaniel, 1788-1867. Papers, 1810-1855.
- II. The papers of Nathaniel Hewit and family deposited in the Library on _____, by Mrs. Aline Webb Menefee
~~In _____ converted the deposit to a gift.~~
- III. Linear feet of shelf space occupied: $\frac{1}{2}$ ft.
Approximate number of items: 192
- IV. Restrictions: None
- V. Literary rights of the unpublished writings of _____ in these papers, and in other collections of papers in the custody of the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library, have been dedicated to the New Haven Colony Historical Society.
- VI. Press release was issued on _____

VII. Biographical note:

Nathaniel Hewit, son of Nathaniel and Sarah Avery Hewit was born in New London on Aug. 28, 1788 and died in Bridgeport on Feb. 3, 1867. He graduated from Yale in 1805 and later from the conservative Andover Theological Seminary, from which he received his license to preach in 1815. His first church was in Plattsburg, New York and it was there that he and his bride, Rebecca Woolsey Hillhouse, to whom he was married on Sept. 26, 1816, lived briefly, before his assignment to Fairfield, much closer to home ground for both, and then in 1830 to the 2nd Congregational church in Bridgeport.

Nathaniel, however, was not to be at home for a good part of his marriage, for his deep commitment to the conservative revivalism of the Second Great Awakening
cont. on B

VIII. Analysis:

Except for four documents at the end, this collection consists of correspondence between Nathaniel Hewit and his wife, Rebecca Woolsey Hillhouse, and of their correspondence with colleagues and friends. After biographical material, in Folder A, will be found the exchange of letters between husband and wife (Folders B-J) then correspondence of NH with others, (Folders K-M), correspondence of RHH with family and friends (Folders NO), and memorabilia (Folder O).

Biographical note cont:

and his outstanding oratorical style made him a popular preacher in upstate New York and Mass. as well as in Conn. After 1828, when he became an agent of the American Temperance Society, he traveled even more frequently and much of his religious thought and love for Rebecca and his family is evident in the letters covering these years.

After Rebecca's death, he married Susan Elliot, daughter of Andres and Mary Pyncheon Elliot, on Nov. 14, 1831. From then until 1834, he performed missionary service in England. Upon his return, he continued his service to his Bridgeport church and later became pastor of a Presbyterian church there and one of the founders of the Hartford Theological Seminary. The only child of this marriage was Rebecca Hillhouse Hewit, who died in 1851.

The children of Nathaniel and his first wife are: Rebecca Hillhouse (1817-1831), James Hillhouse (1819-1819), Nathaniel Augustus (1820-1897), James Hillhouse, 2d. (1823-1824), Sarah (twin 1823-1891), Henry Stuart (1825-1873).

Rebecca Woolsey Hillhouse, first wife of Nathaniel was born June 12, 1794 and died Jan. 4, 1831 in Bridgeport. She was the youngest daughter of James Hillhouse (1754-1832) and his second wife, Rebecca Wolsey, daughter of Melancthon Taylor and Rebecca Lloyd Woolsey. Her family was eminent in many aspects of New Haven life, her father being perhaps the most prominent in his lasting contributions to New Haven life. Her letters here reveal a deep devotion to her faith and her husband, an ability to manage a household on her own, and a facility of style in writing.

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BOX I

Folder A		
Autobiography of Nathaniel Hewit	1855	(10)
Typescript of above		(3)
Diary pages	1812, 1813, 1817	(4)
Pages from <u>Descendants of Rev. James Hillhouse</u>		(3)
Folder B		
Licenses to preach	1811	(1)
Appointment as general agent of American Society for the Promotion of Temperance	1828	(1)
Award of degree of Doctor Theologian by Amherst	1830	(1)
Correspondence between NH and his wife, Rebecca Woolsey Hillhouse Hewit	1818-1822	(9)
Folder C		
Correspondence between NH and his wife	1823-1827	(11)
Folder D		
Continuation	1827	(15)
Folder E		
Continuation	1827	(12)
Folder F		
Continuation	1828	(15)
Folder G		
Continuation	1828	(15)
Folder H		
Continuation	1828	(15)
Folder I		
Continuation	1828	(15)
Folder J		
Continuation	1828, n.d.	(15)
Folder K		
(All of the following letters to and from NH are from colleagues in the ministry, participants in the Second Great Awakening and the temperance movement, conservative in their outlook on religion and dedicated to their preaching mission even at the expense of their personal lives)		
From Melancthon Woolsey in Plattsburgh (uncle of Rebecca)	1816	(2)
Lyman Beecher from Litchfield, Conn.	1817-1818	(2)
Laudatory and grateful letters from both factions in disunion of NH's church in Plattsburgh, shortly after his marriage and move there. Signed by many members of both churches	1817	(1)
From Roger M. Sherman inviting NH to preach at the First Church of Fairfield	1817	(1)
Resignation of above as deacon	1821	(1)
From NH to Robert Anderson, recounting his internal religious struggles	1822, 1823	(2)