

NEW HAVEN COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LIBRARY

Manuscripts

No. B48

Date processed: June 1985

- I. Title Weed-Botsford Family Collection, 1717-1939
- II. The papers of the Weed-Botsford family deposited in the Library on 1946 , by Minnie Mary Weed as a gift.
- III. Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 1
Approximate number of items: 1,000 and 1 v.
- 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- V. Literary rights of the unpublished writings of in these papers, and in other collections of papers in the custody of the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library, have been dedicated to the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: The material in this collection was assembled by Clara Louise Weed, 1872-1938, and her sister Minnie Mary Weed, 1861-1948, both living in New Haven in the 1930's. They were the daughters of Henry Russell Weed, 1830-1894, of Danbury and Charlotte Botsford, 1827-1892, of Newtown. Clara Weed was a professional genealogist. Her letterhead in 1937 reads: "Genealogist, Historical and Patriotic Research." She did extensive research for her own family and the results of that work make up the bulk of this collection. In addition she researched other families in her work as a professional genealogist. Copies of much of that material are also in the collection.

According to the notes and records of Minnie and Clara Weed, their ancestor Jonas Weed, d. 1676, and his wife Mary, d. 1690, came from England to New England in the ship "Arbella" in 1630 with Sir Richard Saltonstall's Company. They settled in Watertown, Mass., and in 1635 Jonas became one of the five dismissed from the Watertown church to form a new church on the Connecticut River at Wethersfield. In 1641 he went with Rev. Richard Denton to Stamford, where he was one of the first settlers.

Henry Botsford, 1606-1686, came from England to Watertown, Mass., and then to Wethersfield, Conn. In 1639 he moved to Milford, Conn., where he became one of the first Planters of that town. He and his wife Elizabeth[n.d.] are buried in the old part of the Milford Cemetery.

(Cont.)

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Biographical Note: (Continued)

By far the most interesting part of the collection is found in the final six folders. It is the diary, 1790-1845, of Elisha Niles, 1764-1845, of Colchester, Connecticut, which Clara Weed transcribed for Mrs. Henry S. Graves (Ellen Marion Welch) [n.d.] of New Haven between 1931 and 1937. It does not appear that Elisha Niles was related to Clara Weed in any way, but rather that this was a paid typing assignment. She noted that the original diary was owned by, and was in the possession of Mrs. Graves.

Elisha Niles fought in the Revolutionary War, enlisting at age fifteen, and then taught school in the Colchester area for thirty-nine years, from 1779-1818. The diary covers his entire life, but he actually kept notes from 1790 to three days before his death in 1845.

The original diary consisted of six books and must have been very lengthy because Clara Weed's notes show that it contained 1,461 original manuscript pages, which she transcribed into 679 pages of typing at 50 cents a page. From this manuscript she extracted notes of the most interesting highlights and created lists of births, baptisms, marriages, church records and deaths. These notes (31 pages) and lists are included in this collection along with Elisha Niles' own list of all the students he had taught during his long teaching career. Even this small portion of the diary is fascinating and makes one wish to be able to read the complete record.

Mrs. Henry S. Graves was the wife of the Dean of the Forestry School at Yale University during the 1930's. An enquiry at the Yale Alumni Records Office yielded the information that Mrs. Graves was Ellen Marion Welch [n.d.], daughter of Pierce Welch, 1841-1909. Going back again to the diary it was found that Elisha Niles' daughter Zelinda, 1789-1828, had married George Welch, 1787-1843, son of Deacon Constant Welch. From Descendents of James Welch by Charles B. Welch, published in 1946, it was learned that George Welch and Zelinda Niles were the parents of Harmanus Madison Welch, 1813-1889, who had been mayor of New Haven 1860-1863 and President of the First National Bank of New Haven. One of his sons was Pierce N. Welch, father of Ellen Marion Welch (Mrs. Henry S. Graves.) Mr. and Mrs. Graves did not have any surviving children and it is not known where the original diary may be located now. *

* Note: January, 1989--The entire original diary and typewritten transcription were donated to the Connecticut Historical Society in 1969 and are available there. See Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin, Volume 35, Number 4, page 114, (1970)

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Analysis: The collection is housed in two boxes and consists mostly of genealogical material collected by Clara and Minnie Weed for their own and related families. Much of the material has index tabs with the names of individual families, but is not in alphabetical order. It has been left in the order in which it appeared in their notebooks. There are four folders containing copies of genealogical research Clara Weed did for miscellaneous families as a professional genealogist. In most cases there is only a page or two per family and they are not in alphabetical order. There are numerous records removed from family bibles, land deeds and other documents pertaining to the Weed-Botsford family which are in chronological order.

Included in the collection were several volumes which have been cataloged and shelved in the Whitney Library. They are:

The Genealogy of the Wives of the Chaunceys, by William Chauncey Fowler; 1858

The Genealogy of the Wives of the Fowlers, by William Chauncey Fowler; 1867

A Genealogy of the Descendents of Solomon Fenton, by Edwin H. Fenton, New Haven, 1885

Preliminary Botsford Genealogy, Descendents of Henry and Elizabeth Botsford, prepared by the Botsford Family Association in 1931 (in two volumes)

The final six folders contain typed excerpts from the diary of Elisha Niles and related material.

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TABLE OF CONTENTSBOX 1Number of
Items

Folder A:	Our Family Genealogies, compiled by Minnie Mary Weed (1861-1948) and Clara Louise Weed (1872-1938), 1904-1906. Handwritten - contains some photographs of houses.	(1 v.)
" B:	Loose photographs removed from volume in Folder A.	(10)
" C:	Weed Genealogy by Minnie and Clara Weed, compiled 1930 - typewritten.	(38)
" D:	Genealogical Information concerning the families of Botsford, Baldwin (Welles connection and Ford connection), Peck, Beard, Smith, Canfield.	(74)
" E:	Genealogical Information concerning the families of Bell, Pierson, Mitchell, Belding; Dibble, Flyer, Wakefield, Strong, Ford, Flyer, Fairchild, Wheeler, Blakeman, Wilcoxson, Smith, Beardsley, Dayton, Whitmore	(137)
" F:	Genealogical Information concerning the families of: Clark, Gold, Coley, Camp, Bennett, Booth, Galpin.	(34)
" G:	Genealogical research for Mary Bassett Christensen, ^{n.a.} compiled 1927.	(24)
" H:	Genealogical research - miscellaneous families.	(91)
" I:	" " " " "	(125)
" J:	" " " " "	(87)
" K:	" " " " "	(64)

BOX 2

Folder A:	Bible Records	(20)
" B:	" "	(37)
" C:	" "	(20)
" D:	Land Deeds, 1717-1782	(7)
" E:	" " 1783-1787	(7)

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Folder F:	Land Deeds, 1788-1793	(7)
" G:	" " 1796-1799	(7)
" H:	" " 1800	(6)
" I:	" " 1800-1809	(10)
" J:	" " 1811-1832	(11)
" K:	" " 1838-1856	(7)
" L:	" " 1857-1864	(8)
" M:	Map of Jabez Botsford (1792-1862) estate, n.d.	(1)
" N:	Gravestone Inscriptions 1649-1938, copied from graveyards in Connecticut - Bethel, Danbury, Hawleyville, Milford, Newtown, Woodbridge and the Memorial Bridge in Milford.	(23)
" O	Will, 1818, of Clement Botsford, 1751-1824, of Newtown	(1)
" P:	Apprentice's Indenture, 1840, of Ira Weed, 1822-1843, of Danbury, with Ira Dikeman and Lewis Judson, carriage lamp makers, New Haven.	(1)
" Q:	Botsford Family Reunion, 1939 - poem by Minnie Weed read at the Botsford Family Reunion, August 23, 1939; a short skit about the first Botsfords in Milford, author unknown.	(3)
" R:	Correspondence - Family, 1803-1927 (Includes letter regarding 1803 smallpox epidemic)	(5)
" S:	" Clara Weed, 1937	(4)
" T:	Notes taken in 1907 from Milford Town Records, 1640-1730, concerning family members.	(4)
" U:	Historical notes concerning Stamford and Wethersfield.	(15)
" V:	Diary, 1790-1845, of Elisha Niles (1764-1845), Colchester, Conn. - notes excerpted and transcribed by Clara Weed between 1931 and 1936.	(31)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)Box 2

Folder W:	Diary of Elisha Niles - Continued. Contains list of all the students he taught during his lifetime of teaching in the Colchester area, 1779-1818.	(50)
" X:	Diary of Elisha Niles - Continued. Births, baptisms, marriages and church records from The Second Baptist Church of Colchester in the New Salem Society.	(17)
" Y:	Diary of Elisha Niles - Continued Deaths, 1779-1845, with index	
" Z:	Correspondence and notes relating to the Niles Diary, 1931-1937	(12)
" AA:	Miscellaneous printed material, n.d.	(5)